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# English Church Needlework







CHASUBLE IN CLOTH OF GOLD.

## Preface.

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THE revival of Church Needlework, and its consequent use in most of the churches of our land—a revival largely brought about by the effect of the Oxford Movement, and one which has grown with our Church growth—have brought strongly to the fore, in this our twentieth century, the need of a plain, practical handbook. Art, education, and the capability of women to execute and plan what in earlier years they vaguely wished, has caused the imperative demand for handbooks upon all sorts of subjects, particularly those connected with religious art, wherein women, by their money and actual manual aid, have been of so much assistance.

It is the want of such a handbook that has induced me to republish some articles lately written or edited by me. They have now been revised and enlarged, and, with the addition of illustrations taken from actual examples, will, I trust, be of some service to those who are about to glorify God's House with the gifts of His bestowing.

The needlework of Englishwomen is already world-famed. May we not, in this new century, echo the words of Mrs. Dolby in her valuable book on Church

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Embroidery, written in the last century, but now, alas! out of print?—

“Our exhibitions of ancient and modern art, our schools of design, our opportunities of travel, whereby we may seek and learn for ourselves, are all in our favour for the accomplishment of works of real artistic skill. And if we use our gifts well, we may enable those who come after us, not only to laud our industry, but to acknowledge conscientiously that the Church needlework of the latter half of the nineteenth century could not be improved upon.”

MAUD R. HALL.

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## English Church Needlework.

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THE art of embroidery is undoubtedly of the greatest antiquity, and takes precedence even of painting. The earliest method was by needlework upon canvas, but later other materials came to be used, and the embroidery, from being only employed, as its name implies, for a border or trimming, grew larger in design and execution, and extended more or less over the whole fabric. Embroidery and tapestry are often confounded. The difference should be clearly understood, the latter being woven in a loom, the former being worked upon the already woven material.

From the earliest period embroidery has been chiefly devoted to ecclesiastical purposes, and in the first ages of the Christian Era we find the clerical vestments, the altar hangings, and the curtains of the churches all decorated with the most elaborate designs. The whole history of the Church was worked upon the toga of a Christian senator, and Anastasius records the subjects of these embroideries, which, interwoven with gold and silver thread, produced a most wonderful effect.

The Israelites embroidered their garments, especially those worn in public worship, but the words "embroidery" and "embroidered" that occur so often in our English versions of the Book of Exodus must not be taken always to mean needlework. As often as not they mean the weaving "in

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stripes of the gold, violet, and purple, and scarlet twice dyed, and fine twisted linen."\* So the pomegranates at the bottom of Aaron's tunic, between the golden bells, were probably made of coloured shreds, and of that kind now called cut-work. Ingulph, in describing the many hangings bestowed upon the Church of Croyland by the Abbot Egelric, says that some were ornamented with birds wrought in gold and sewed on. This is evidently again cut-work.

It was not until the thirteenth century that embroidery obtained for its several styles, distinguishing and technical terms, but Dr. Rock states that in the inventory, drawn up A.D. 1295, of the vestments belonging to St. Paul's Cathedral, the *opus plumarium*, the *opus pectineum*, and the *confutum de ferico* are severally mentioned.

*Opus plumarium* was at first the general term for embroidery. The stitches were laid lengthways, and overlapped each other, producing somewhat the appearance of a bird's plumage. It was also called "feather stitch," in contradistinction to cross or tent stitch.

The *opus pulvinarium*, or termed equally cross, tent, or cushion stitch, was much like the Berlin-wool work of the present day. It was done in the same stitch, and on much the same material, and was generally used for cushions, either for kneeling upon in church, or to uphold the Mass-book at the altar. It was specially fitted for working heraldry, and from quite an early period to the present day, has been used for this purpose.

The *opus pectineum* was a sort of woven-work, imitative of embroidery. There are many specimens of it to be seen, and it was evidently worked by women in small looms, with a comb-like instrument—hence the term *pecten*.

\* *Textile Fabrics*, by Dr. Daniel Rock.

The *opus consutum*, or cut-work, is practically the French *appliqué*, and includes several sorts of decorative accompaniments to needlework. When anything—flower, figure, or fruit—is wrought by itself and then transferred to the fabric it is to ornament, it comes under the heading of cut-work. For better effect, the faces of figures, the outlines of fruit or flower, are done in embroidery or even painting, and instances are extant in which the cut-work is framed or edged in plain or gilt leather, after the fashion of the leading in a glass window.

Vasari claims for Sandro Botticelli the invention of this cut-work; but, accurate as this may be in regard to the work of Italy, there is, as Dr. Rock points out, a valuable piece of cut-work executed by French hands almost a century before Botticelli's time, thus proving that the art was well known many years before the birth of the Florentine painter.

Beautiful examples of foreign work may still be seen, but in this short history we must confine ourselves to what Englishwomen have done, and then go on to consider what Englishwomen may still do.

Dr. Rock says: "Our mediæval countrywomen were so quick at the needle that they could make their embroidery look as if it had been done in the loom—really woven. Not long ago, a shred of crimson cendal, figured in gold and silver thread with a knight on horseback, armed as if of the latter time of Edward I., was shown us. At the moment we took the mounted warrior to have been, not hand-worked, but woven, so flat, so even was every thread. Looking at it, however, through a glass, and turning it about, we found it to be unmistakably embroidered by the finger in such a way that the stitches for laying down upon the surface, and not drawing through the gold threads and thus saving



## 14 English Church Needlework.

expense, were carried right into the canvas lining at the back of this thin silk."

Towards the close of the thirteenth century our countrywomen struck out a line of embroidery for themselves, and, mixing the old *opus plumarium* with the newer stitches, evolved a style that was as beautiful as it was novel. The fame of it soon spread abroad and won for it the admiring appellation of *opus Anglicum*, or English work. In what lay its exact peculiarity has puzzled many foreign archæological writers. "Il serait curieux de savoir quelle broderie ou quel tissu on designait sous le nom de *opus Anglicum*," said the Canon Voisin, while examining a cope of English work given to the Church at Tournai. In 1360, Cardinal Talairand, Bishop of Albano, makes mention in his will of some white vestments, elaborately ornamented with English embroideries; and Ghini, Bishop of Tournai, bequeaths to that Cathedral an old English cope and a corporal of English work.

We are fortunate, as workers, to have access to such a unique and beautiful piece of English needlework as the Syon cope, in the South Kensington collection. Here, in the delineation of the human face, the stitches began in the centre of the cheek, and were worked in circular, not straight lines, into which, however, after the further side had been made, they fell, and were so carried on through the rest of the flesh; in some instances, too, even throughout the figure, draperies and all. But this was done in a sort of chain stitch, and a newly practised mechanical appliance was brought into use. After the whole figure had thus been wrought with this kind of chain stitch in circles and straight lines, then, with a little thin iron rod ending in a small bulb or smooth knob slightly heated, were pressed

down those middle spots in the faces that had been worked in circular lines; as well, too, as that deep, wide dimple in the throat, especially of an aged person. By the hollows thus lastingly sunk a play of light and shadow is brought out; this, at a short distance, lends to the portion so treated a look of being done in low relief.

Chain stitch, then, worked in circular lines, and relief given to parts by buttons sunk in the faces and other portions of the persons, constitute the elements of the *opus Anglicum*, or embroidery after the English manner. How the chain stitch is worked into circles for the faces, and straight lines for the rest of the figures, is well shown by a wood-cut, after a portion of the Steeple Aston embroideries, given in the *Archæological Journal*, L. IV., p. 285.

Though, indeed, not merely the faces and the extremities, but the dress, too, of the persons figured, were sometimes wrought in chain stitch, and afterwards treated as we have just described, the more general practice was to work the draperies in our so-called "feather stitch," which used also to be employed for the grounding, but diapered after a pretty, though simple, zigzag design, such as we find in the Syon cope.

As the years went on, the beauty of the English work increased rather than declined, and we find Matthew of Paris recording (1246) that "the Lord Pope, having observed that the ecclesiastical ornaments of some Englishmen, such as choristers' copes and mitres, were embroidered in gold thread after a very desirable fashion, asked where these works were made, and received in answer, in England.

Then,' said the Pope, 'England is surely a garden of delights for us. It is truly a never-failing spring; and there, where many things abound, much may be extorted.'

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“Accordingly, the same Lord Pope sent sacred and sealed briefs to nearly all the abbots of the Cistercian Order established in England, requesting them forthwith to have forwarded to him those embroideries in gold, which he preferred to all others, and with which he wished to adorn his chasuble and choral cope, as if these objects cost them nothing.”

Nor was it only abroad that the embroidery was so prized. Mabilia of Bury St. Edmunds embroidered a chasuble for Henry III.; and Edward II. paid a hundred marks—a goodly sum in those days—to Rose, wife of John de Bureford, a citizen and mercer of London, for a choir-cope of her embroidery. The cope was to be sent to Rome as an offering to the Pope from the Queen. Even lands seem to have been bestowed as a reward for teaching this much-prized art, for Godric, the Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, “granted to Alind half a hide of land, so long as he should be sheriff, on condition that she should teach his daughter the art of embroidery.”

It is interesting to note that, in spite of the sudden fall and decline of English needlework in the period occupied by the Wars of the Roses, the art was never really lost. Poor and thin, even coarse it became; yet, such as it was, it lived to become the nucleus of new and more perfect execution in the dawn of the seventeenth century. Raised work now became the style most affected, and a good specimen is to be found in one of the four copes still to be seen in the library at Durham, having, it is said, been wrought for, and presented to the Cathedral, by Charles I. The vestment is of red silk, well sprinkled with bodiless cherub-heads, crowned with rays and borne up by wings.

In these later days, and with the facilities offered for

study and instruction, perfection in the art of Church needlework can be attained. Much, too, can be and is done by those who, without making it their profession, have both time and taste for it. I have seen embroidery worked by amateurs equal in "design and execution" to any produced by the larger schools and warehouses, and I would suggest that in this way valuable help may be often given by those whom want of bodily strength, or other causes, prevent their giving more active assistance to Church and parish. The main objects to keep in view are simplicity of design and *extreme* care in execution. Patience, in Church needlework more than in any other occupation, brings its own reward, and for interest and fascination embroidery has no peer.

## I. On Materials.

**B**EFORE proceeding to more practical directions for work, it may not be out of place to make a few remarks upon the choice of *materials*. Necessity often makes a choice impossible, and wool and flax have to take the place of silk and gold or silver; yet even here much can be done by a careful selection of evenly woven stuffs, rejecting all that are knotted, uneven, and above all flimsy, in texture.

Even in the richer materials, workers are often tempted by a delicate shade of colour to forego this most important consideration, and it is one upon which too much stress cannot be laid. The selection of any material for ground-work that is not perfectly woven will only lead to disappointment. It renders the work itself more difficult in that it puckers easily, and is more likely to be affected by heat or damp, and "sag," however carefully it has been stretched and lined.

It is, of course, impossible to lay down any rules as to the pattern of materials, but beautiful effects may be obtained by a simple design of embroidery upon an elaborately designed material. This is especially noticeable in the cut-work or *appliqué*. Many large firms—the Spitalfields Silk Association, for example—are now copying the old patterns in silk damask and adapting them to present use. The designs here reproduced will give some small idea of their beauty.

# English Church Needlework. 19

No 2 has the sacred monogram interwoven, and is made in several colours. No. 3 is a modern design, adapted from the Gothic by Martin Luther, the seeds of the pome-

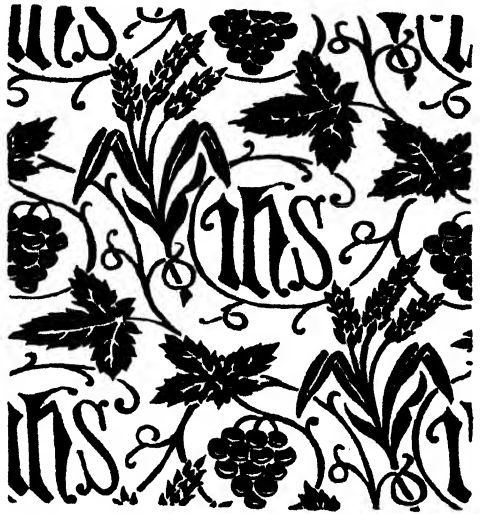


1. THE MANTLE (ANCIENTLY COPE) WORN BY QUEEN VICTORIA AT HER CORONATION.

granate being introduced as symbolical of immortality. No. 4 is from an early Italian fourteenth century design. The harts are reposing on foliage, collared and chained to pillars, and gazing up to clouds, whence proceed drops of

## 20 English Church Needlework.

rain or dew. Above the clouds are two eagles, symbolical of power and might. The design is intended to illustrate Psalm xlii.—“Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks.” It is effective in green with the design in gold, or in the different plain colours. No. 5 is woven in silk upon a satin ground, and, being in a pattern that is well distributed, is very economical. It can be obtained in



2. GRAPES, VINE-LEAVES, AND WHEAT.



3. POMEGRANATES WITH SEEDS.

an extra width, and is, therefore, suited for large pieces of work, as it obviates joins. No. 6 is from an Oriental design introduced into England early in the fifteenth century. It is also in an economical pattern. No. 7 is from a late thirteenth century design, and is much used for frontals and hangings.

In the choice of velvet, especially for cut-work, care must be taken to select only that with a close, firm pile. If at all long, it will easily crush and show the slightest pressure.



4. HARTS UPON FOLIAGE.





Cloth of gold is often used for *appliqué*, but should not be employed by the amateur for a small design, as it frays at the edges and is not easily adapted. Cloth of silver is also used, but it is liable to tarnish, and is therefore not so often employed. For both silver and gold cloth a black edging is best. Other colours take from rather than add to the rich effect.

A word or two as to gold thread. It will be found best in most instances to substitute for this *gold-colour* twist, and this not only on the score of expense and ease in working,



5. LILIES AND TUDOR ROSES.



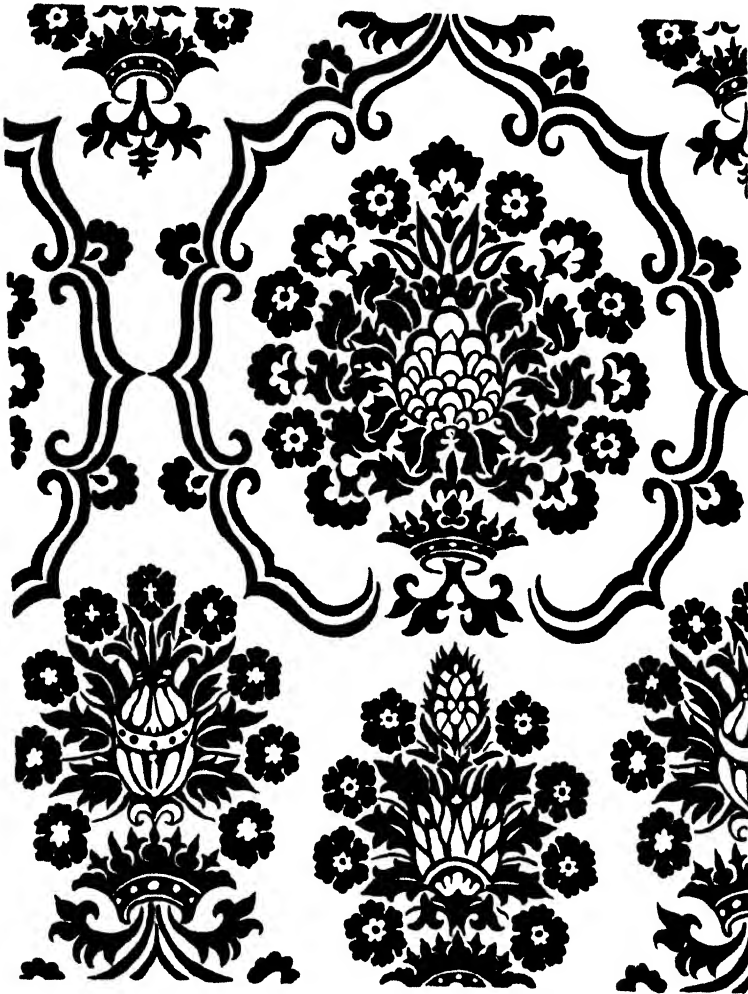
6. ORIENTAL DESIGN.

but for the lasting effect; for damp, gas, and other causes are fatal to the preservation of its brilliancy. The gold of former days must have been purer, or outward circumstances more propitious, for the metal still glistens upon work that has stood the vicissitudes of hundreds of years; but our modern gold bullion is different, and our climate, to say nothing of certain dyes, has the effect of turning it to black.

The correct fringes for altar and other hangings are

## 24 English Church Needlework.

those made in spaces of different colours, any or all of which are included in the needlework, as well as the ground of the cloth. Should one colour in the fringe be chosen to predominate over the others, it should be that of the stuff



7. THE CROWN DESIGN.

embroidered upon. The fringe at the bottom of the altar cloth may be any depth, but it is generally from three to four and a half inches. That for the super-frontal must be less deep than on the frontal.

A fringe must never be sewn at the top of an altar cloth, instead of a super-frontal, for the origin of fringe was the ravelling out of the material itself, or rather the knotted ends of the woof of a woven material, which formed a graceful and practically useful finish to any drapery. It therefore loses all sense of use if it is put at the top of anything as a mere trimming. The same argument shows the correctness of using the chief colours of the ground and needlework, the fringe being supposed to be the untwisted threads of the whole cloth.

Where there is no super-frontal, and a finish is required, a thick silk cord is the proper thing to sew on the top edge.

Good and suitable fringes are made of all silk, and are therefore very expensive.

## II. On Designing.

FOR those who desire to excel, and have a laudable wish to endeavour to restore the character of our Church needlework to something nearer to the ancient renown I should advise the study of a simple and correctly drawn powdering, such as a fleur-de-lis or Tudor rose. If copied from ancient work, so much the better. After carefully examining the lines, the curves, and the turnover of the leaves, place a sheet of tracing-paper over the design and trace it carefully. Lay the tracing on a soft cushion or folded woollen cloth, fastening it securely with pins. Take a No. 8 sized sewing-needle—which, for greater convenience, may have the eye inserted in a cork—then, holding the needle upright, prick the lines of the pattern at regular distances, taking care that, although near each other, the prickings do not touch. Make a clear round prick, which can only be done by holding the needle as directed. The pricks should be as nearly as possible the same size. Having gone over the whole of the lines with the “pricker,” remove the pins and hold the pricked design up to the light, and observe if any part of the pattern has been left unpricked; and remember that the correctness of the work chiefly depends on the accuracy of the pricking.

Next take a piece of flannel, a nail in width and a yard in length, and proceed to make a tight roll of it, fastening the edges, when rolled, with stitches.

Then scrape some pipeclay into a saucer and add to it a small teaspoonful of powdered charcoal. Mix these powders together until they are of a smooth grey tint. Dip one end of the flannel roll into this, and having carefully pinned the tracing on the material to be embroidered, proceed to strike it evenly and briskly over the pierced design, taking care that the pounce passes every line. Now withdraw the pins very carefully, and gently raise the design from the material, taking care not to drag it, and if properly pounced the design will be found clearly traced on the material. If this should be white linen, it may now be marked out with a fine etching-pen, dipped in either blue or black ink. If there is too much pounce on the material, remove it by lightly tapping the back of the linen before etching in the design, which should now be carefully compared with the pattern, and any mistakes corrected with the pen.

For tracing silk, or velvet, different mediums are required. For white or light coloured silk, the pipeclay should be coloured with powdered indigo and the lines etched in with indigo, rubbed up with a little gum-water, and the pen filled by taking up the colour with a brush. On dark silk or velvet, the pouncing can be made with violet-powder dusted over the pricked lines. The etching should be done with flake white and gum-water. The work is now ready for framing.

In the best days of English embroidery, few of the most important parts of either figure or flower designs were worked on the material which was intended to form their background. They were usually traced on a thin, but strong, unbleached linen, stretched in a wooden frame, two layers of the linen being often used together. The work was done on this linen, and afterwards cut out and applied to the ground material.

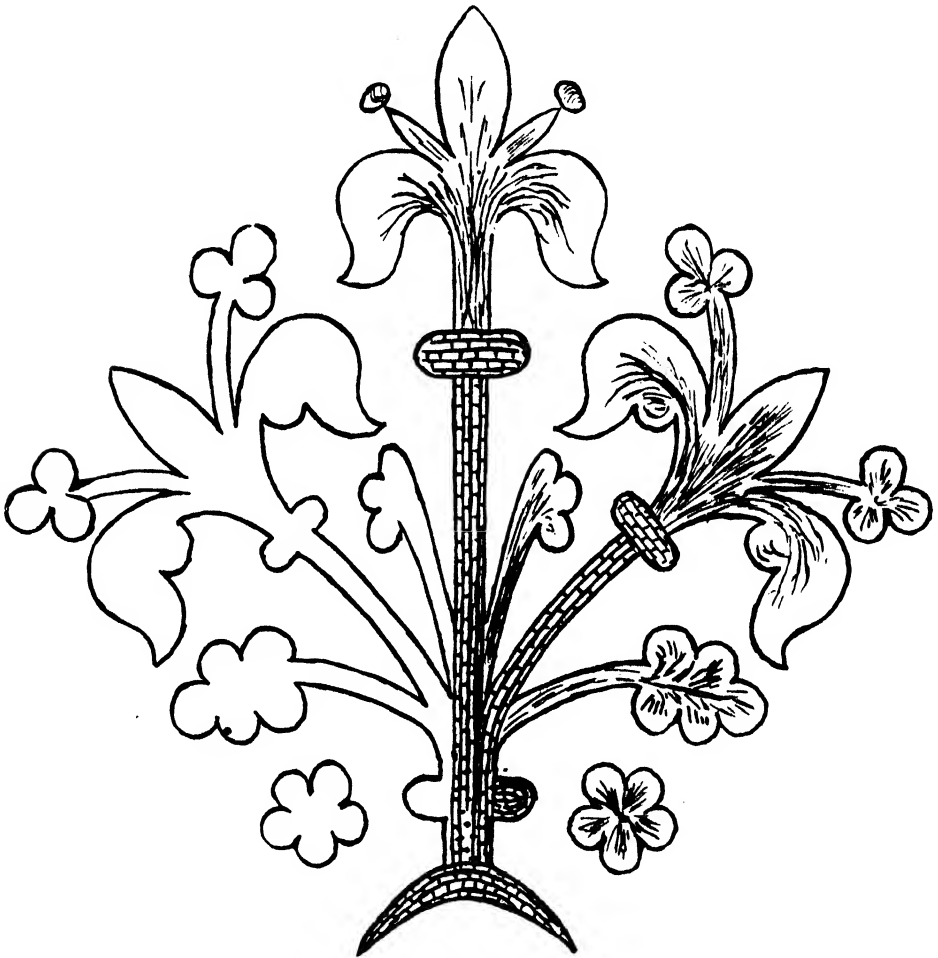
In framing the linen it should be sewn by the thread to the webbing in the frame, the sides being hemmed down over string. This strengthens them for lacing to the stretchers, which are put in when the material is sewn to the webbing. The pins are then put into the holes, and, with a packing-needle and strong but fine twine, one side of the linen can be sewn to the stretcher. Fasten the twine securely at one end of the stretcher and draw it evenly to the other end, where it is to be fastened, leaving the string sufficiently long to draw the lacing tighter if necessary. The opposite side must then be laced in the same way, but this must be drawn perfectly tight, so as to stretch the linen evenly and firmly, and again fastened with an end of sufficient length to draw up the lacing when necessary. The work is now ready to be embroidered.

The frame, if small, may be placed on a table, from which it must project sufficiently to enable the worker to reach the embroidery. The frame should be steadied on the table by placing a weight on it. Larger frames can be supported on the backs of two chairs of equal height, or on tressels. The worker's chair should be of such a height that she can work without bending much over the frame. Both hands must be used in working, and the second fingers of each should be provided with an ivory or bone thimble.

The left hand should be under the work, and pass the needle and silk through the work to the right hand, which is to be kept on the upper side. In beginning and finishing a needleful of silk, the silk must be on the upper surface of the work, and no knot should be used.

Before any important piece of ecclesiastical work is undertaken, the question of design demands much consideration. The best and most elaborate embroidery is worse than wasted if it only represents a design that has no character or distinction.

Before beginning a piece of work for a church, especially an ancient church, it is always desirable to be informed of its style of architecture, its date, and to know to whom it is dedicated. These particulars are of great importance in choosing designs for



1. DESIGN BY THE SALISBURY DIOCESAN SCHOOL FOR CHURCH NEEDLEWORK.

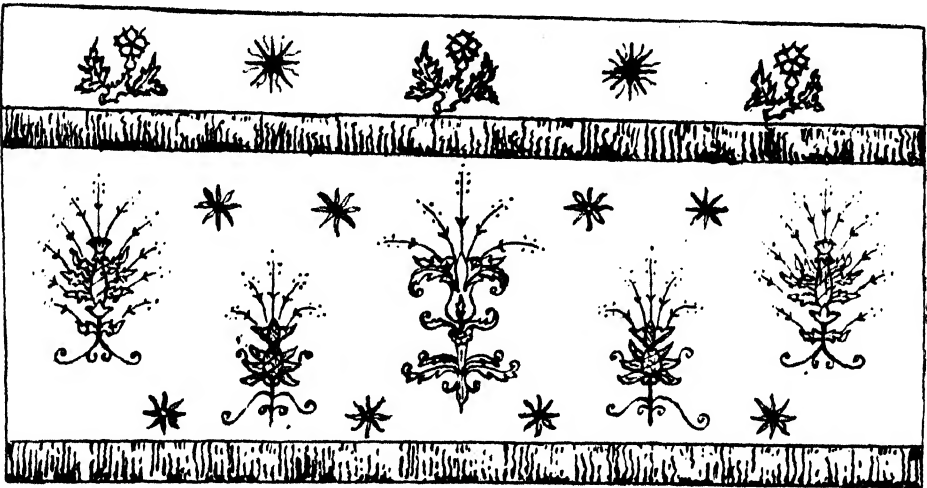
the embroidery. For instance, if the church is of the fourteenth century, and dedicated to St. Andrew, powderings such as the lily (No. 1), taken from a fourteenth century encaustic tile, may be alternated with St. Andrew's crosses for the super-frontal,



## 30 English Church Needlework.

lectern, or pulpit hanging; the frontal of which the design is given (No. 2) has four different kinds of powderings of this date.

Illuminations are excellent as examples for colouring embroidery, and we can find many beautiful suggestions for super-frontals and orphreys in the lovely and carefully drawn borders of illuminated manuscripts of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. No doubt much of the Church work of these dates was designed by the same artists who decorated the beautiful MSS. Ancient painted glass is also a valuable



2. ALTAR CLOTH.—DESIGN BY THE SALISBURY DIOCESAN SCHOOL FOR CHURCH NEEDLEWORK.

assistance in supplying designs; and although the *leading* in the old windows sometimes distorts the objects it intersects, yet the diapers, the foliage, and the borders of really old painted glass are full of beautiful outlines and designs well suited to embroidery. As a rule, all needlework designs are better taken from drawings than from sculpture, as the latter requires more light and shade than the needle can give. Much shading should never be attempted in Church embroidery. Colour and outline are the two important points

on which its merits should rest; and if these are secured, the results will almost always be satisfactory, even if perfection in the stitches employed has not been attained. There is still another source from which instruction may be obtained for embroidery for vestments, in the brasses and incised slabs of mediæval ecclesiastics. The vestments portrayed on these were no doubt those they had constantly worn, and the elaborate borders of the copes and chasubles, the exquisite patterns of the stoles and maniples, and even the cushions on which their heads rest, are all true copies of the very vestments and broideries in which they were accustomed to celebrate, or to make use of. And from such patterns as these we can copy and trace most exquisite and fitting designs for our own Church embroidery, and in this way obtain the beautiful patterns from which the embroideries, so celebrated in mediæval times, were worked. The works have long since disappeared, but in time we may see them reproduced.

The stitches in which these vestments were worked are often so clearly represented as to be easily identified.

### III. On Stitches.

**B**EFORE a worker can really attain proficiency in all the delicate details of embroidery, she should, by constant practice, have mastered all the initiatory stitches, and I would caution her not to be discouraged if success does not attend her first efforts.

Nothing so well illustrates the proverb, "Practice makes perfect," as embroidery, whether it be in delicate art shading or ordinary marking of initials on handkerchiefs.

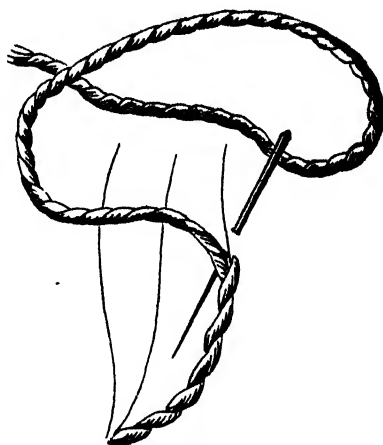
It is best, therefore, not to attack the most prominent part of the design first, but selecting the corner that most nearly resembles the main pattern, work from that. Each curve and twist that is accomplished will look more finished and even than the previous one.

First and foremost the hands need special care. Damp or "clammy" hands are a great drawback to a worker, so also is a roughened skin. The best soap and every possible means of softening the skin must be used, and no care is too great to keep the hands in a soft and smooth condition.

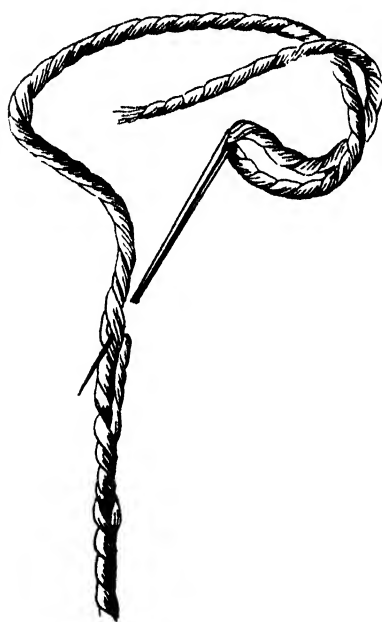
Nor can too great care be taken over work that has to be done in a London atmosphere. Nothing so dims the brightness of the colouring as exposure to a foggy day; and while the work is in hand, each piece of the design when finished, should be most carefully covered with tissue paper, firmly tacked over the edges. If the completed design does not look smooth and bright, there is something wrong.

Friends are often anxious to see what is being done, and the perpetual covering and uncovering is extremely bad for the work and the preserving of its delicate shades. It is, therefore, best to be very firm, and resolutely refuse to uncover any part of the design when once it has been covered.

Of the stitches here given, the first and simplest is No. 1, or "outline" stitch. Though simple, it requires a little practice to get the stitches exactly even, and when turning a scroll to show no *edge* to betray where the needle has been put in or out.



1. OUTLINE STITCH.

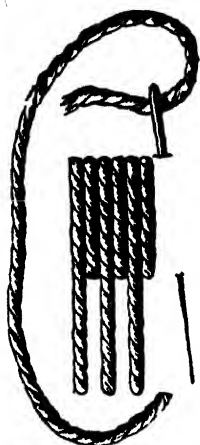


2. SPLIT STITCH.

No. 2, or "split" stitch, is very useful for stem work when a fine line is desired. It can also be worked very finely for a flat surface, and has the appearance of a very minute chain stitch. It was much used in ancient embroideries, especially for working the faces in any large or elaborate design.

Nos. 3, 4, 5, and 6 show different methods of working "short and long" stitch, which is really the foundation of the working of most patterns. No. 3 is to give the firm outside finish to a straight edge. No. 4 shows the way in which a leaf or design should be worked when the shades are, so to speak, dovetailed one

with another. No. 5 gives the manner of "filling" a design, while No. 6 shows how to lay a flat foundation of floss threads, to be afterwards stitched down or "couched" with fine silk in the pattern required, though for small surfaces these floss threads are often left plain.



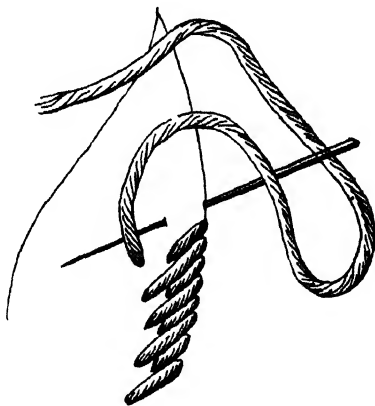
3. SHORT AND  
LONG STITCH.

No. 7. This stitch (basket) is worked over a fine cord sold for the purpose, which gives it a raised appearance. If the beginner practise all these stitches she will shortly become an adept, and a large and most engrossing field of work will be open to her.

To obtain a good effect in "couching," the worker, after laying the foundation (No. 6), must stitch the strands down with fine sewing silk at intervals, making a pattern as most suitable. "Simple couching" consists in stitching in straight lines at intervals, while diagonal or diaper patterns are more elaborate.

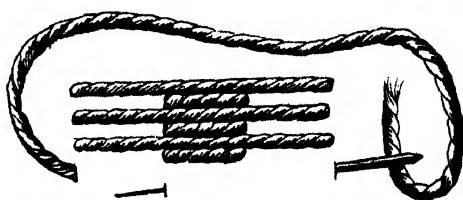
Binding is done by laying double threads of "filo" and stitching them down from side to side, carefully turning the double threads at the edge of the pattern.

In working stems and scrolls with gold thread it is necessary to pass the end of the thread through the material on which the embroidery is done; for this you require a sharp stiletto or "piercer." A wool needle will do if the eye be large enough and its point sufficiently sharp to pierce through the silk or stuff which is the foundation.



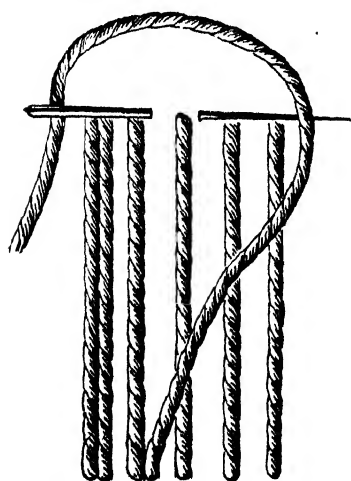
4. SHORT AND LONG STITCH.  
(Another method.)

Gold thread is tiresome to work with, as it requires much care to keep it from unravelling while it is being worked. Care should be taken to use only a short thread in the needle. As a rule, two threads are generally used, and the stitching done in red or yellow silk, and this stitching must be perfectly even.



5. SHORT AND LONG STITCH.  
(Another method.)

The illustrations of stitches here given embrace those most used in embroidery. They are, in fact, the *foundation* stitches, and are varied or altered by the worker when found necessary. On this last much of the success of the work depends, for in order to know which stitch is best for which purpose, the worker must be thoroughly conversant with all stitches and their possible adaptations. Embroidery, to be effective, must be done with judgment and appreciation, and it is impossible to have judgment without knowledge.

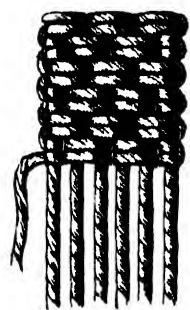


6. SHORT AND LONG STITCH.  
(Another method.)

I have mentioned back stitch as being an effective filling, especially for linen or cambric embroidery. Simple as it is—as a stitch—it will not be really effective unless care is taken to make the stitches *absolutely* even as to size and distance apart. The thread must not be drawn too tight.

For spots or dots, back stitch may be used if made double—that is to say, a second stitch being placed carefully upon the first, to raise it above the surface of the material; and here again the thread should not be

drawn too tight. With chain stitch, also, there are several variations, all more or less effective. One of these is worked with two threads of a different colour. They must both be in the same needle, and the effect is very good for certain kinds of work. Hold the darker shade under the thumb, keeping the lighter well to the right, draw both threads through, and the dark link is made. The lighter thread, which has disappeared, will then come out at the left, ready to be held under the thumb, and make in its turn a *light* link. There are many variations of this stitch given in Mr. Lewis Day's valuable book on "Art in Needlework," and though it deals more with



7. BASKET STITCH.

embroidery generally than with what is called Church work, and has consequently many stitches seldom now used, a careful study of the book would be useful to any amateur about to take up Church needlework. As already stated, the stitches chiefly used in the embroidery of the Middle Ages were *couching*, *long and short stitch*, or *opus plumarium*, *gothic* or *chain stitch*, and *twist stitch*, which was used for scrolls. These stitches, of course, admitted of several varieties in the method of working them. Couching was used entirely to fasten materials, such as gold thread, silk, or twist, on the surface of the material. The couching stitches were taken either somewhat irregularly, or with such perfect regularity as to produce a pattern of contrasting colour, on a ground of gold thread or silk, which they secured to the material on which they worked. *Long and short stitch*, or *opus plumarium*, was used in the Middle Ages as the general term for "embroidery," as we now call it, and represents the principle on which all floss silk embroidery is done. The stitch should be begun from the

top of the leaf or flower to be worked; the lightest shade should be used first, and the stitches placed irregularly as to length, some longer, some shorter, but not alternating too evenly. The next shade is then, as it were, stroked into the first, taking care never to cross another stitch, or to split the silk in working it.

A good idea of how the stitches should arrange themselves can be obtained by inserting the fingers of one hand between the fingers of the other, the fingers representing two shades of silk and lines of stitches.



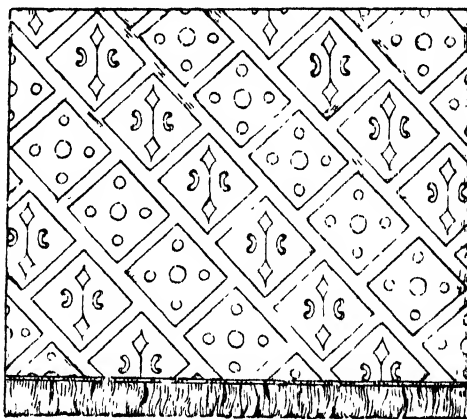
## IV. On Frontals.

THE earliest English altars were probably made of wood, and many of them were square and were adorned with movable frontals, and from these they received their decoration, as, whether of wood or stone, these altars were made without ornament of any sort. The frontals were often of thick plates of gold or silver, enriched with gems of great value, whilst less wealthy altars had silken frontals, embroidered with rich designs in gold and silver and silks of various hues.

On lower festivals less splendid coverings were used. These were often made of linen, beautified also with embroideries. The simple design, No 1, taken from a thirteenth century MS., is of this class. Such a frontal for ferial use in many country churches is most suitable. Woollen materials were very seldom used in early times—silk, velvet, and linen being in much greater esteem. The colours in use in the early Anglo-Saxon times were those of the Levitical use—white, gold, red, blue and purple. These colours supplied the changes which were made for the different seasons and festivals, and always corresponded with the vestments worn by the celebrants. The burse and chalice veil on the altar also matched the vestments in colour and decoration.

According to the old English use of Sarum, all the altar frontals were removed on Maundy Thursday, and were not replaced until late on Holy Saturday, the altars remaining

without adornment of any kind during this time. On Easter eve the altars were again adorned, this time with white frontals, rich with gold and silver embroideries and shining gems. The hangings on the walls and behind the altars were all resplendent with the most beautiful ornaments the church possessed. "The super-altar in the earlier Anglo-Saxon times was a slight piece of oak wood, about six inches square, having the signs of the Cross cut on it, and the name of the saint in whose honour it was blessed. This board was then encased in thin plates of silver, and marked on the upper side with crosses; the under side showed the figure of the saint whose name it bore."\* Salisbury Cathedral once owned a magnificent super-altar, set in gold. The step at the back of the altar—used as a shelf for the cross, candlesticks, and flower vases—is not properly entitled to the name of super-altar. This shelf, or step, should be



I. A LINEN FRONTAL.

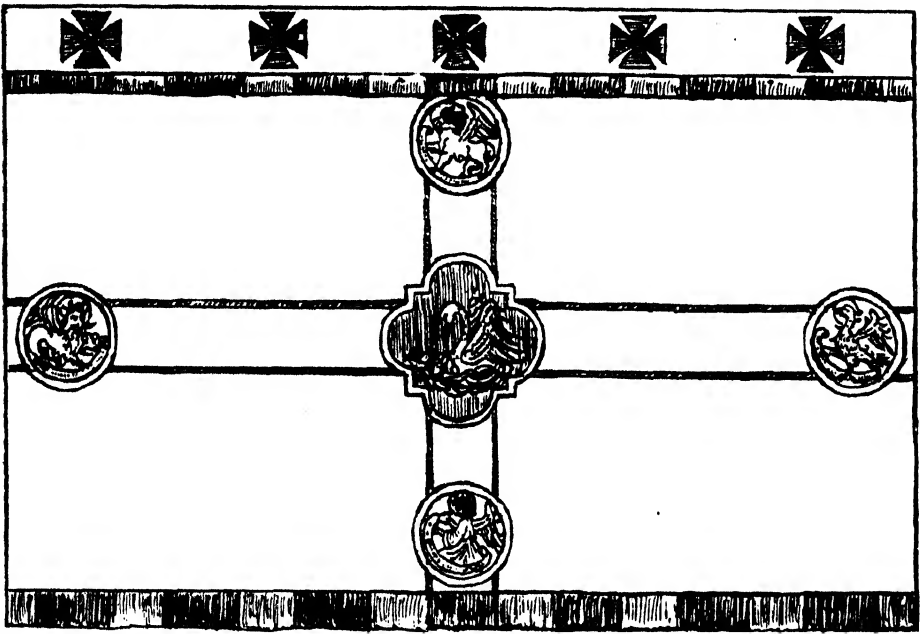
covered with a red silk or velvet cover, without fringe, and may have some simple embroidery, such as five small stars or Tudor roses, or a border pattern worked on it, but should always be less decorated than the super-frontal. The super-frontal should have a bold design, which can be seen and distinguished from the body of the church, as it fixes the eye more than any other part of the embroideries on the altar, and should be distinguishable from the nave. In parish churches in the smaller villages, where there is very little provision for keeping

\* Dr. Rock's *Church of Our Fathers*, vol. i., p. 250.

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the altar frontals, two are quite sufficient for the seasons—red for daily use, for Sundays and minor festivals, and for Lent, and white for the greater festivals. One red silk or velvet super-frontal will serve for both frontals.

In the Middle Ages the “super-altar” was covered with a purple pall during celebrations, and as the name of “purple” stood at that time for either red, crimson, or dark violet,

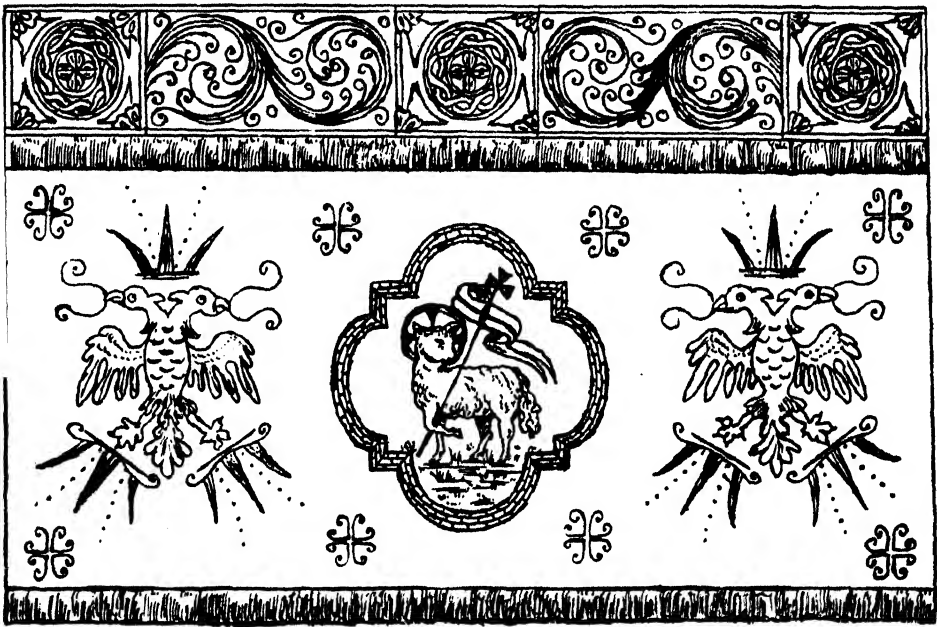


2. ADVENT FRONTAL AND SUPER-FRONTAL.

our red super-frontal is a fitting representative of this old liturgical practice of our British and Anglo-Saxon ancestors. Besides being a kingly colour, it also betokens blood, and is therefore well adapted to remind us of the Holy Sacrifice.

The frontal should be of the richest material that can be provided. The colour chosen should be true red, not crimson, which is not an effective background for embroidery, but a full rich tint inclining to orange rather than to

blue, a colour which would represent the carbuncle. The width of the altar should determine the size of the decoration, and if more than one design is used, it should be carefully ascertained that all are of the same style and date. A drawing of the frontal should be made, so that the designs when mounted may fit into the places they are intended to occupy, This drawing should be pounced on the material as a guide



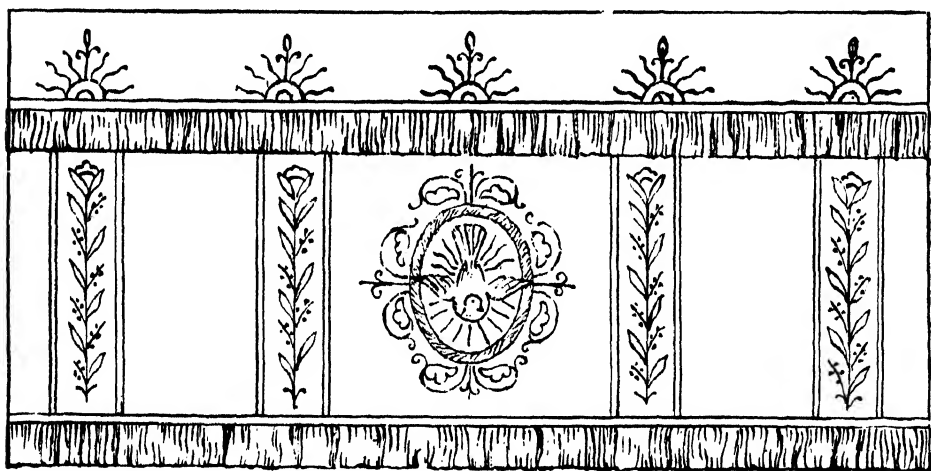
3. ADVENT OR LENTEN FRONTAL AND SUPER-FRONTAL.

to the mounter. All frontals should be lined with strong dark blue or dark red linen.

For the season of Advent a dull shade of purple is recommended. The design No. 2 is intended to be worked on this colour; the cross laid on it to be of Sarum red, couched with white swansdown with red or black; the quatrefoil in the centre to have a border of No. 6 stitch, in white, stitched down with black; "The Pelican in her Piety" embroidered

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in white, shaded with grey, on a ground of red, laid stitch, the *nest* in shades of brown in twist silk. The evangelistic symbols may be worked in outline, in red on white, with No. 6 stitch border sewn down with black to correspond with the centre; the five crosses on the super-frontal to be worked in the same stitch, alternately red and white, taking red for the centre. The centre and the four symbols for this frontal are best worked in small frames and applied afterwards on the cross to their places.

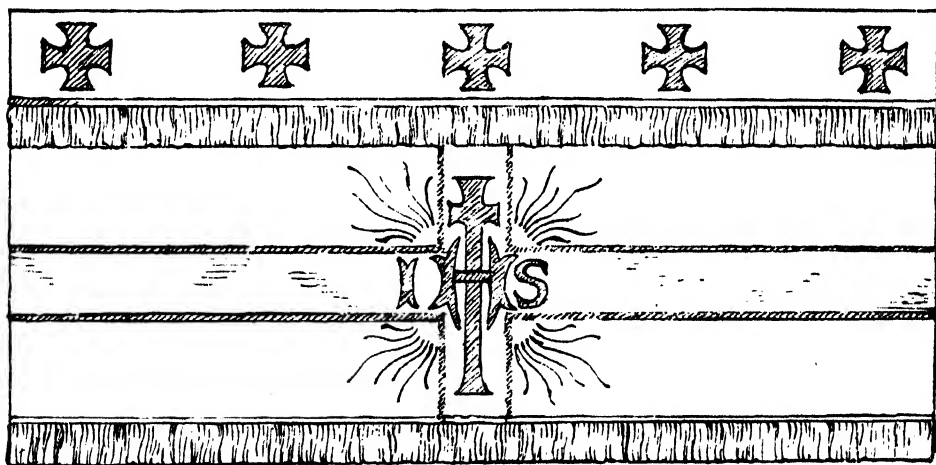


4. FRONTAL IN GOLD, GREEN AND WHITE ON CRIMSON CLOTH OR VELVET.

No. 3 is a more elaborately ornamented altar hanging either for Advent or Lent. It is worked in gold thread and floss silk, on the same shade of purple brocade. The super-frontal is worked in coarse gold thread, and the flower in the centre of the medallions in shades of red. The eight crosses on the frontal are intended to be worked in red stem stitch. The border round the *Agnus* is in gold thread sewed with red, and the flourishes and rays in gold thread also; the *Agnus* in white, on a ground of light blue "laid stitch"; the banner in white with red cross, and the staff with its cross in gold

thread; the nimbus round the head of the *Agnus* in gold thread, with the cross in red; the double-headed eagles in shades of golden brown. Spangles may be used with good effect for the dots between the rays, if they are preferred to French knots; if the latter are used, they should be worked in embroidery silk.

Upon the white or festival frontal the best skill of the embroiderer should be exercised. The design should have some definite idea carried out in it, and be in accordance with

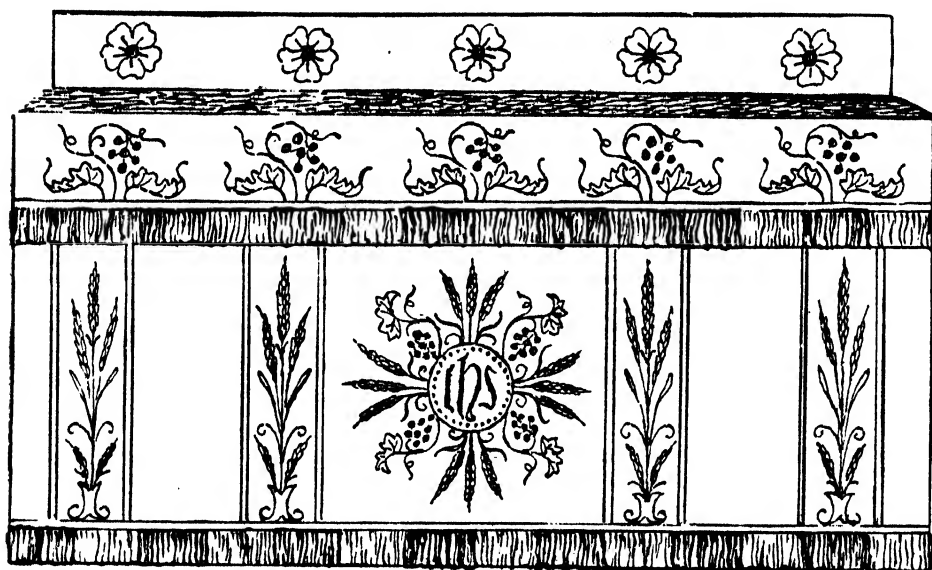


5. FRONTAL FOR LENT—WHITE OR SILVER ON VIOLET CLOTH.

the other ornaments of the season, or bear some emblems of the saint to whom the church is dedicated. The super-frontal may be red, with embroideries of gold and colours, but the general tone of the frontal should be light and bright. Of old, yellow frontals were used on festivals of confessors, and few colours make better backgrounds for embroidery than the shade of old gold, which was in such request in the early days of the Christian Church in England. White, dull red, violet, green and black, and every shade of blue, show to the greatest advantage on this colour, but gold thread and white floss are

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beautiful in the extreme. It is believed that pale blue was the ferial colour formerly used in the diocese of Sarum, and the hand-woven linen of this shade makes a very beautiful frontal, embroidered in flax thread in white fleurs-de-lis and yellow stars. Green is not strictly an Anglican colour, although used in England at an early date, but at first it seems to have had only a monastic use. It was seen in the abbeys, but not for some time in the cathedrals or parish churches. It was used

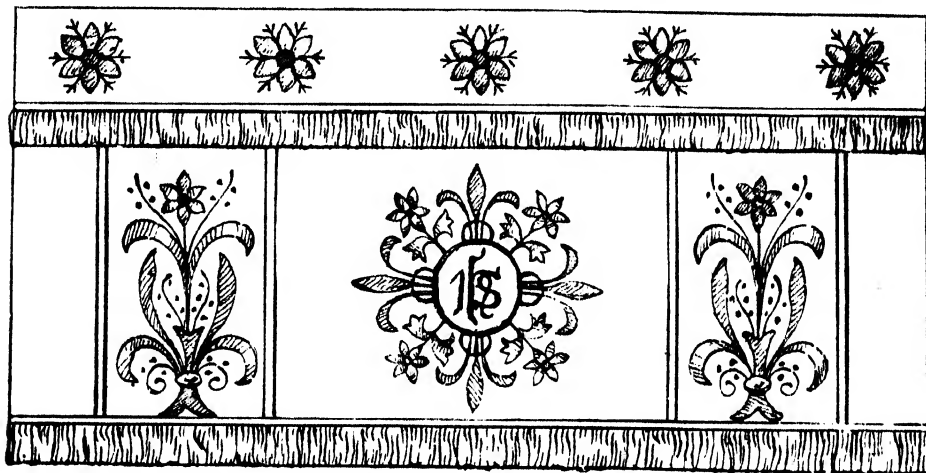


6. FRONTAL FOR HARVEST FESTIVALS—WITH SUPER-ALTAR FRONTAL.

for the processional cope or cloak, but not for chasubles, stoles, or altar hangings until a later date.

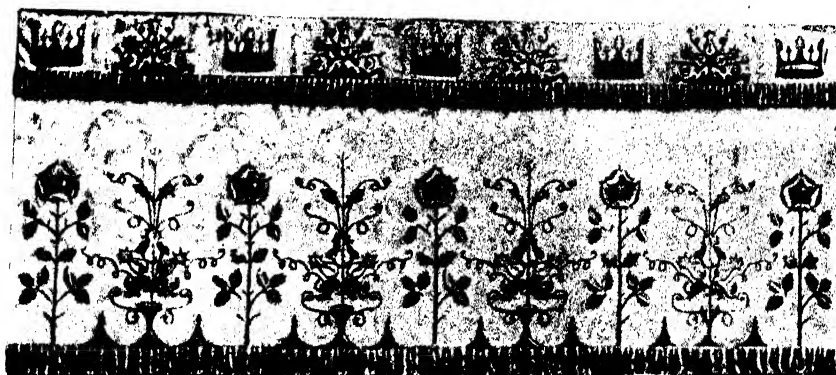
The Church embroiderer who desires to make an offering of the best that art can produce has now an opportunity of working on brocade of exquisite design. As I have already stated, many of the finest ancient specimens in the South Kensington Museum are being reproduced with the greatest exactitude, and some of these fine designs may assist even those who are not yet much skilled in the embroiderer's art,

as they make worthy and beautiful antependiums if the design is simply *outlined* in gold thread ; but this must always be done in



7. FRONTAL FOR ORDINARY OCCASIONS.

a frame and on well-stretched framing linen, on which the brocade must be carefully tacked before beginning the work. The stoles worn by the celebrant at the altar should always correspond with the frontal of the day, as should also the chalice veil and burse.

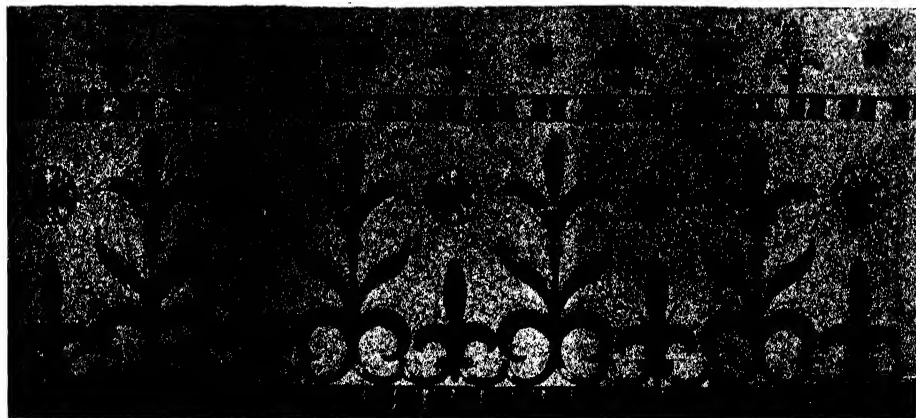


8. THE FRONTAL FOR ASCOT PARISH CHURCH.

No. 8 is a simple yet effective design lately worked for Ascot Parish Church. The ground is of cream brocade em-



broidered alternately with Tudor roses on tall stems and fleurs-de-lis. The colouring of the whole design is exquisitely



9. A WHITE FRONTAL.

harmonious, the roses of a pink shade of terra-cotta, the fleurs-de-lis touched with puce tones, and the foliage of a tender green hue. On the super-frontal are jewelled crowns and sprays delicately worked, and the edge is finished with a pale green fringe.

No. 9 is another simple design for a white frontal. The

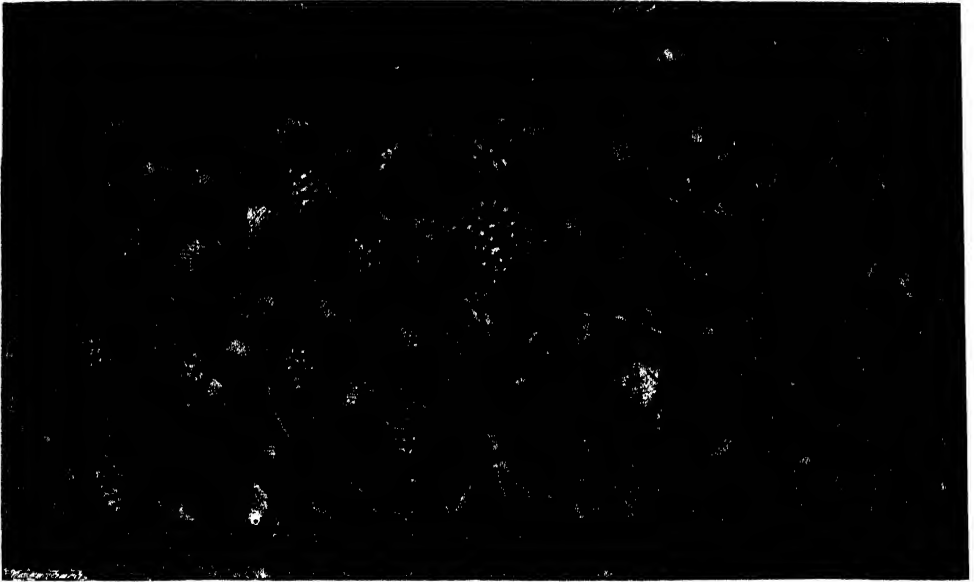


10. A VIOLET ALTAR FRONTAL.

groundwork is of brocade, from which the flowers, shaded from pink to red, stand out with beautiful effect. The leaves are of

shaded green, and the fleurs-de-lis are worked in gold basket stitch.

The foundation of No. 10 is of purple Roman satin, on which are embroidered powderings of pomegranates in gold silk. In the centre is the sacred monogram in red, spangled and outlined with gold thread. The orphreys are of purple velvet. At the top of each orphrey is a bunch of thistles. In the centre of the orphreys is a solid cross of gold thread on



11. A RED FRONTAL.

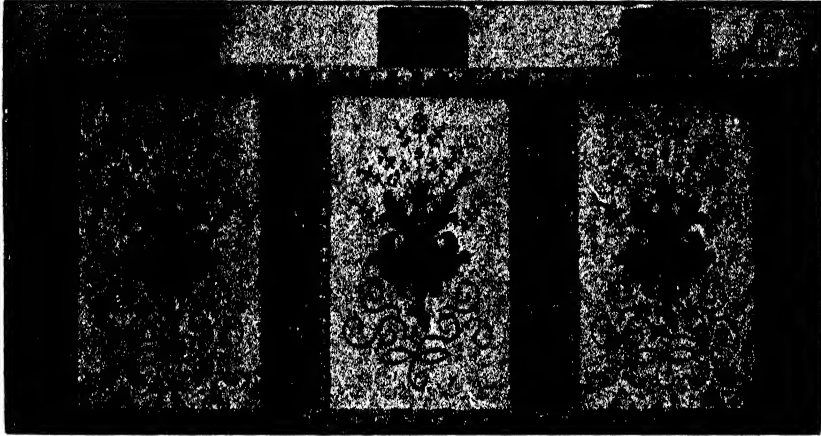
a red velvet shield. The stole that has been worked to correspond will be found on p. 107 of the chapter on Stoles.

One of the most beautiful frontals yet seen, both for design and the manner in which it has been worked, is Miss Mary Gemmell's rendering of "I am the True Vine," as illustrated in No. 11.

It was worked for St. Paul's Church, Knightsbridge, upon a ground of fine red damask, the embroidery consisting

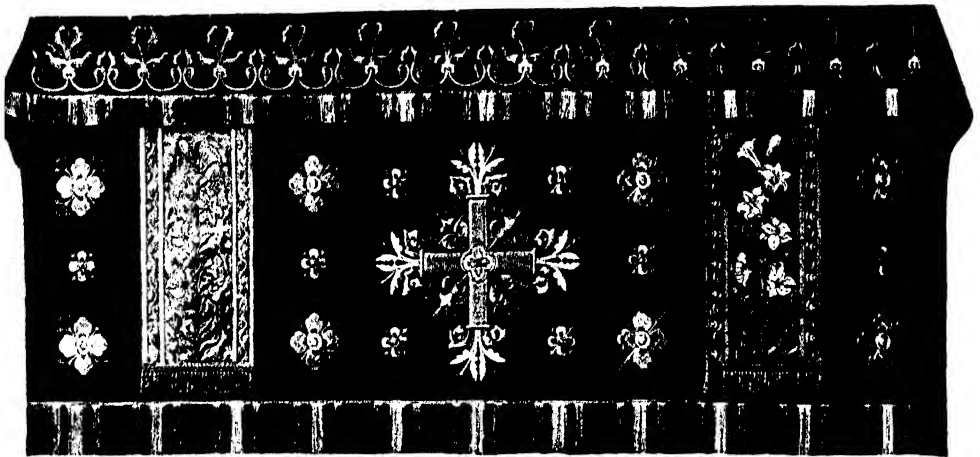
## English Church Needlework.

of thick raised gold work for the grapes and stems, and shades of gold floss for the leaves. The result is very



12. AN EASTER FRONTAL.

splendid and satisfactory. But yet more beautiful was the same design, carried out in natural colours, upon a white silk background. The exquisite proportion of both leaves



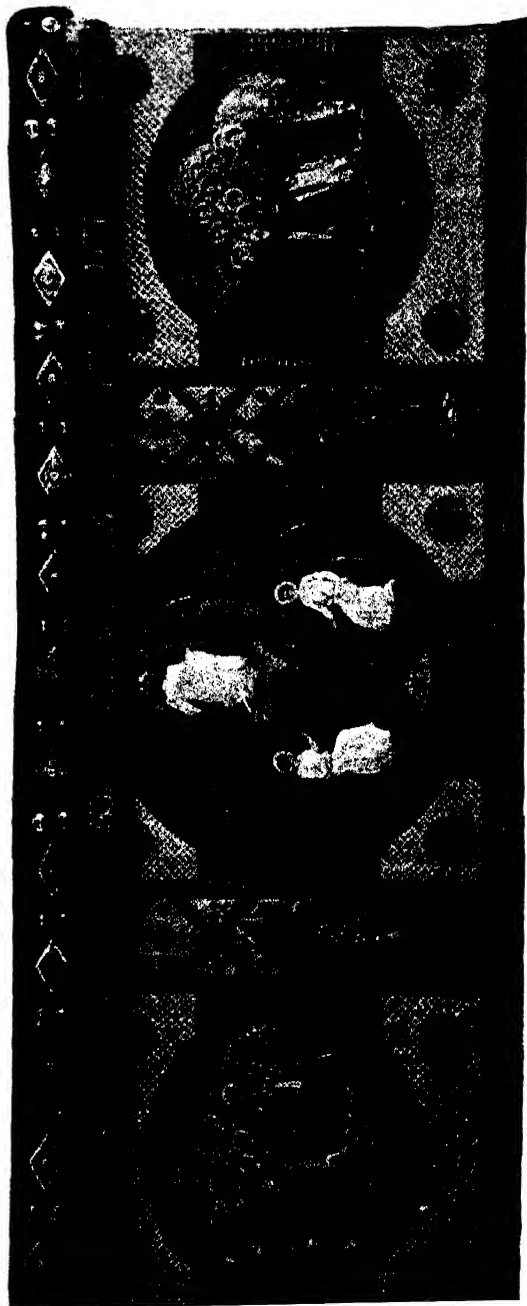
13. A MODERN ALTAR CLOTH.

and fruit here showed to full advantage, and, worked as it was by master hands, the effect was magnificent.

No. 13 is a specimen of a modern altar-cloth that will bear comparison with many of the gorgeous achievements of the Middle Ages.

An amateur, in the strict sense of the word, should not attempt the making up of such a work as this. The utmost that can be done effectually by a private individual is to prepare the various designs used for powderings, the central cross, and the orphreys, and to send them to be mounted by a professional. In few private houses can this part of the work be done satisfactorily, the large frame that is necessary being alone a great inconvenience.

The altar-cloth in question has as background the richest crimson silk velvet. The large cross in the centre is mainly worked in gold and



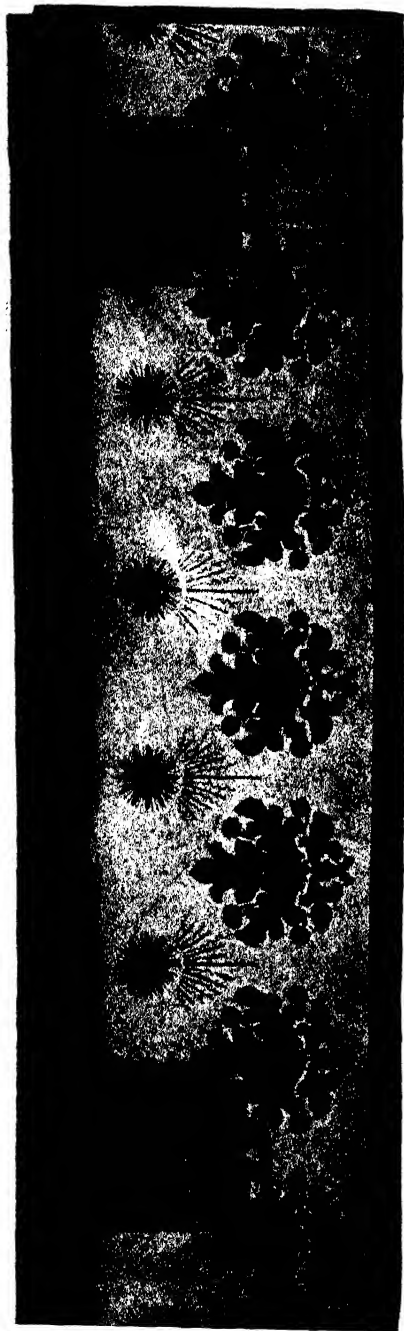
14. THE EASTER ALTAR FRONTAL AT CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL.

## 50 English Church Needlework.

gold-coloured threads, laid down in high relief in what is

known as "basket" couching. To manage this, parallel lines of whipcord are laid down at regular intervals over the foundation and held firmly in position. Generally three, but sometimes four, lines of purse-silk are then placed across these threads side by side and close together, and are held down with stitches of the same silk, brought up from the wrong side, carried over the lines of purse-silk, and back again to the wrong side. Usually a securing stitch is thus placed between every two lines of cord; and when the next set of purse-silk strands is laid, the securing stitches must be placed between those which held the first laid strands of silk.

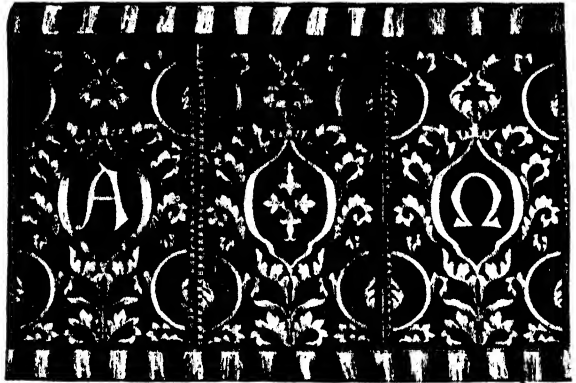
15. THE EASTER ALTAR FRONTAL AT ST. AGNES, KENNINGTON.



The centre of the cross is particularly good in effect, though extremely simple. A circle is worked there entirely in white laid work, with a small blue cross resting upon it. Bosses, too, are formed in various parts of the design,

by working yellow floss silk over a small round padding, and over that again is arranged a network of fine gold thread. Spangles are judiciously intermingled, and are sewn on according to the old models—that is, sprinkled over the foundation itself as isolated ornaments, instead of being, as in so many modern instances, laid directly upon the embroidery.

The cloth is powdered with small crosses worked to correspond with the main central one, and these also have been *appliqué* after having been worked. Delicate sprays of gold surround the crosses, and for these two threads of gold are always laid at the same time. The gold used for Church embroidery must be the best that is procurable, and it is indispensable that it should not tarnish. Some of the gold thread is twisted over a silk foundation, some over cotton. As a general rule, the Chinese is perhaps preferable to any other, as being more evenly twisted and more durable.



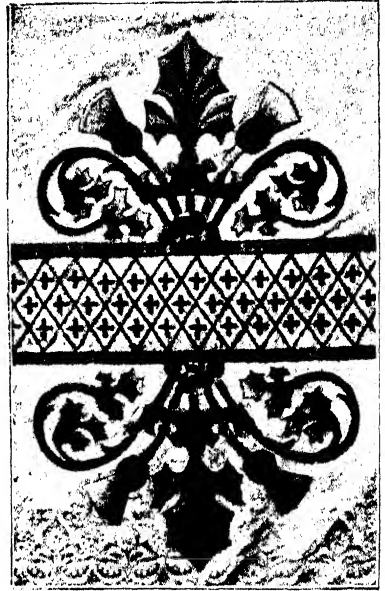
16. AN EFFECTIVE DESIGN FOR A FRONTAL.

The embroidery of the orphreys would form a pleasant task for anyone who does not care for the labour of working the whole of the cloth. In No. 13 they are embroidered upon a foundation of rich red silk damask, of a rather lighter shade of the same colour as the velvet. A conventional spike of the white lily forms a charming panel-like filling for these, and the sides are bordered with a band of flat gold

galon edged with fine cord. They must, of course, be finished with rich fringe at the bottom.



17. CENTRAL MEDALLION OF A WHITE ALTAR CLOTH.

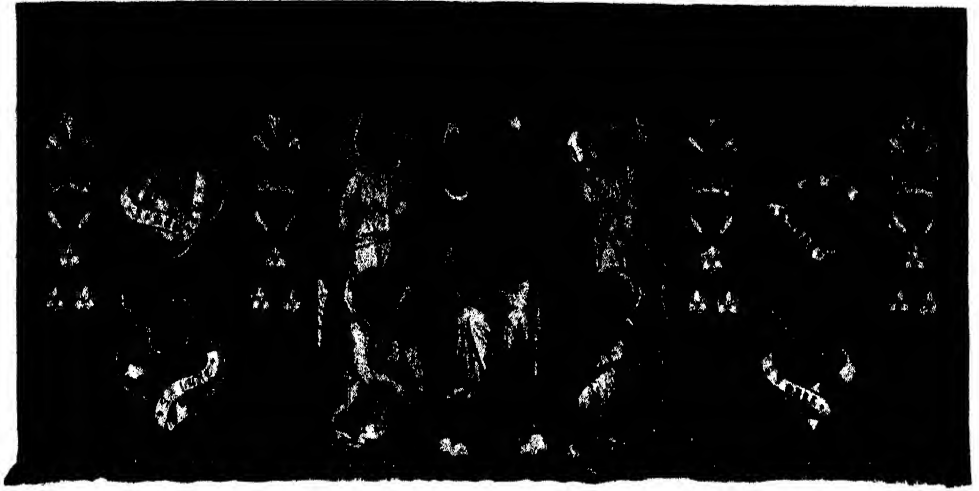


18. DESIGN ON EITHER SIDE OF THE CENTRAL MEDALLION.



19. A BEAUTIFUL DESIGN.

The super-frontal of an altar hanging, too, can be recommended as a pleasant piece of work for a lover of embroidery.



20. THE RED ALTAR FRONTAL, LADY CHAPEL, SALISBURY CATHEDRAL.



21. SUPER-FRONTAL AND PANELS.



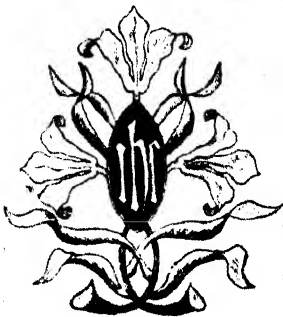


The foundation must always be of the same material as the cloth itself, and the same colours must be used in the embroidery.

I have seen a beautiful piece of work in which the main colours are blue, green, and shades of gold, the darkest of which are nearly brown, while shades of gold thread correspond with those upon the larger piece of work. The lower scallops are of gold thread worked in "brick" stitch, which is merely an adaptation of the basket couching already alluded to, and rendered flat by being worked without the cords beneath the strands.

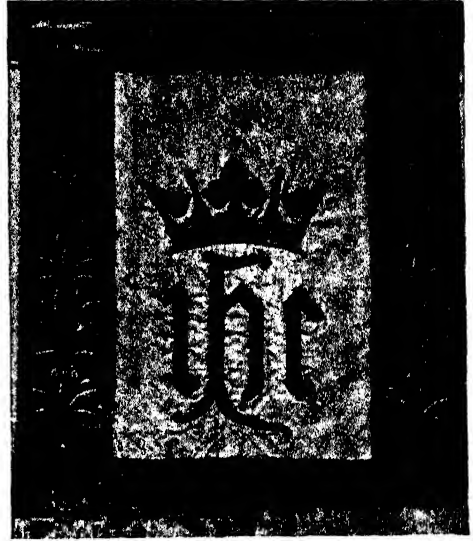
A smaller number of threads, too, is laid at the same time.

The material of the altar-cloth itself is of white silk, ornamented with a beautiful design of Tudor roses and thistles.



13. A POWDERING.

The beautifully designed super-frontal given in No. 21 is designed to carry out the words of the Forty-second



22. THE CENTRE-PIECE OF AN ALTAR FRONTAL.

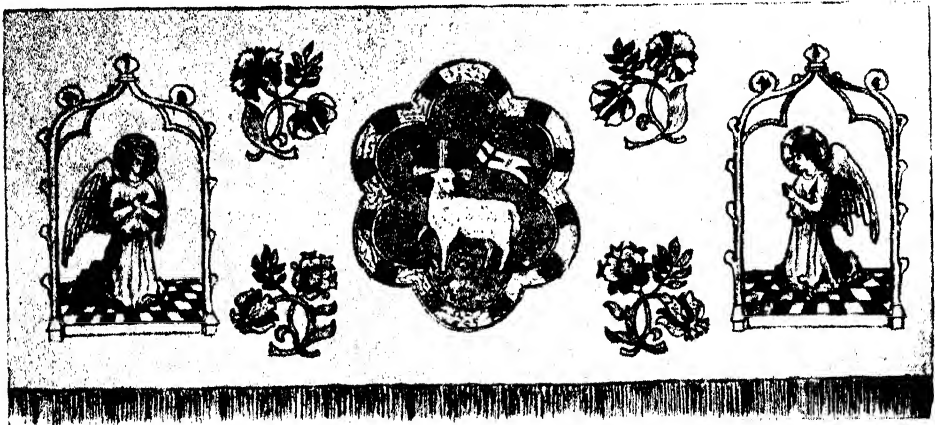
The super-frontal, made to match it, is of gold coloured silk, and is decorated with gold Tudor roses and pale green fleurs-de-lis. The I.H.S. in the centre is embroidered in deep crimson.

No. 20 is the red frontal of the Lady Chapel at Salisbury Cathedral, and was designed by Mr. Gambier Parry.

Psalm. It might, of course, be carried out in any colours. The panels follow the same method of design.

No. 24 was worked for Bishop Carter, of Zululand. The ground is cream brocaded Roman sheeting. The Lamb in the centre has a background of pale blue, and is standing on a green hillock dotted with flowers, the whole enclosed in a waved band of stone colour and olive green.

The two angels are copied from a fresco of Benozzo Gozzoli in the Palazzo Ricardo in Florence. The right



24. A FRONTAL NOW IN ZULULAND.

hand one has a yellow robe, the wings worked in many shades of blue, pale green, purple, and bronze. The robe of the one on the left is shaded from soft pink to crimson, the wings in this case being green, yellow, and bronze. Both these figures are beautifully embroidered by one of the best workers of the Society. Special care was bestowed on the fine work of the faces and hands.

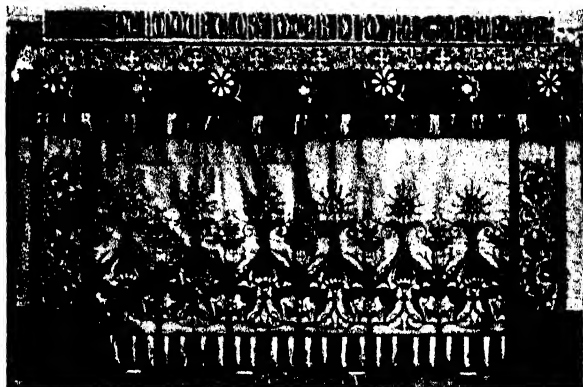
Four powderings of conventional flowers—tulips and carnations, etc.—repeat the varied colouring of the angels' robes and wings.

# English Church Needlework. 57

No. 26, of white brocade, has been lately worked by the ladies of Watringbury, Trent, for their parish church.

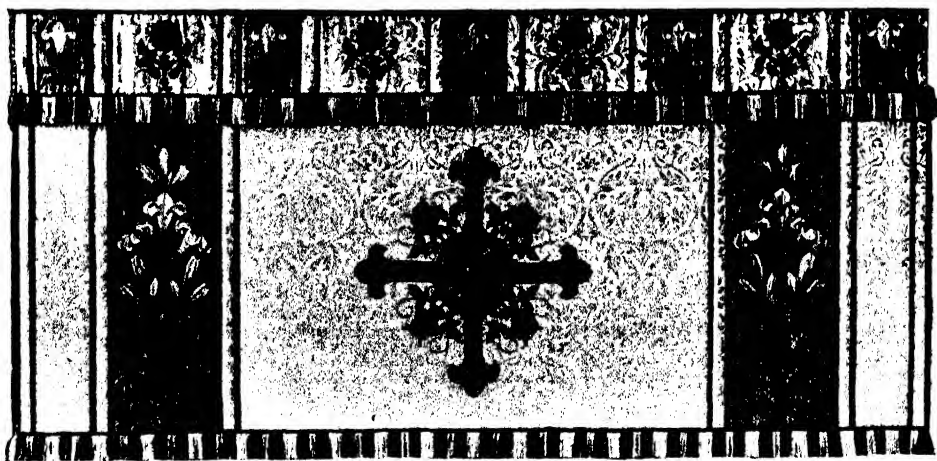
The central cross is of gold, the centre being crimson, and the background shaded from pale blue to white, and "rayed" with gold.

The roses are in natural colours. The lilies are also in natural colours, leaves and flowers being veined with gold, and standing out well from the background of "diapered" blue, through which the pattern of the brocade can be traced with wonderful effect. The fringe is carried out in white, green, gold, and crimson.



25. CENTRAL PORTION OF A WHITE AND GOLD ALTAR FRONTAL IN SLEDMERE PARISH CHURCH.

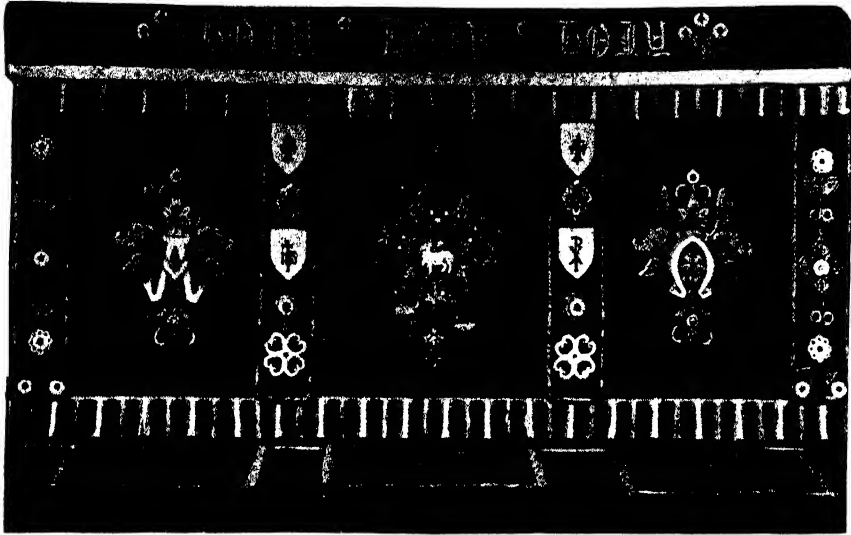
The roses are in natural colours. The lilies are also in natural colours, leaves and flowers being veined with gold, and standing out well from the background of "diapered" blue, through which the pattern of the brocade can be traced with wonderful effect. The fringe is carried out in white, green, gold, and crimson.



26. AN EASTER FRONTAL AT WATERINGBURY.

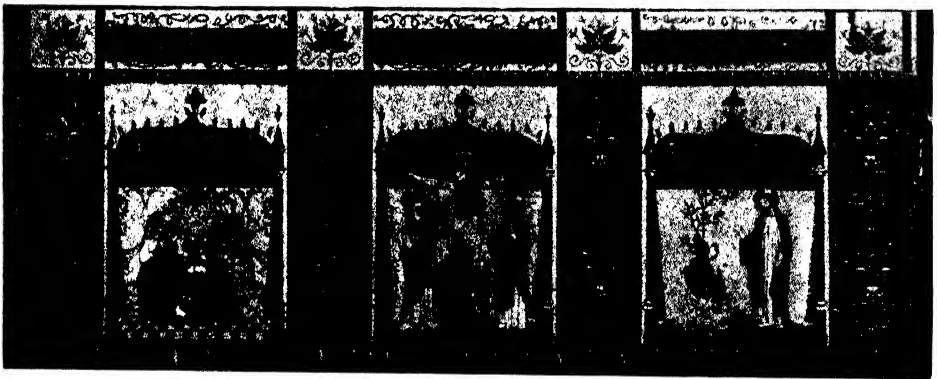
The super-frontal is of the same brocade, "blocked alternately white and blue, the rose being on the white, the lily

on the blue, and so arranged as to be opposite the same flowers on the frontal.



27. A GREEN ALTAR FRONTAL.

No. 27 is a beautiful frontal of green silk damask, only Sarum colours having been used in the embroideries.

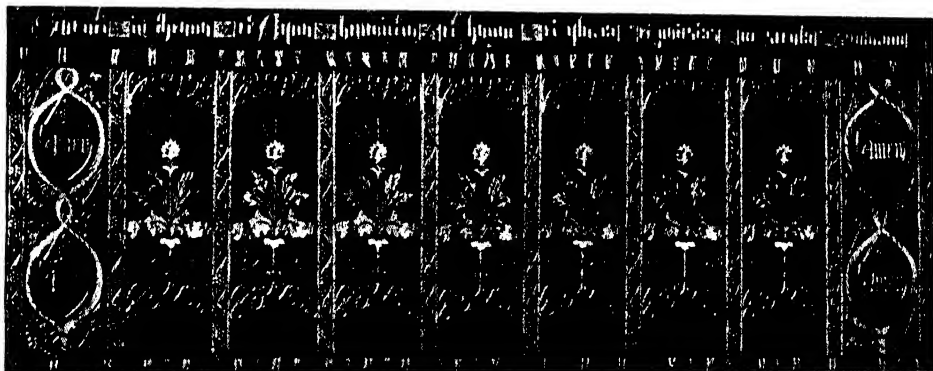


28. AN EASTER FRONTAL.

The central panel is very fine work — the Agnus Dei being raised upon a circle of crimson velvet. The scroll,

with the word "Alleluia," is also on crimson velvet worked in silver, gold, and white. The jewels are real gems—amethysts and sapphires taken from an antique piece of jewellery.

The orphreys are of green velvet. The white satin shields, etc., are worked with golds, greens, and silver. The super-frontal is of crimson velvet, worked in corresponding colours. The dossal is also of the same colour and materials—the pomegranates standing out in bold relief against the velvet bands. The dove with the seven-fold rays is of natural size,



29. THE NEW ALTAR CLOTH, NEWCASTLE CATHEDRAL.

and copied from a living bird. Each feather is minutely worked, the effect being very lovely. Across the top are seven stars—symbolic of the seven angels of the Churches. The whole is 10 feet 6 inches in height and 7 feet in length.

No. 29 gives the new frontal in Newcastle Cathedral, and is a very elaborate piece of work, being divided into seven richly embroidered panels. The divisions are narrow bands of cloth of gold, with lightly raised gold enrichments upon them.

The panels themselves are worked upon with trceries,

## 60 English Church Needlework.

stems, and foliage of raised gold, with a central ornament partly *appliqué* and partly of shaded silks—pale blue, pink, and white on the green background, all surfaces begin pleasantly toned and heightened and outlined with gold.

The two orphreys, at the ends, are on a background of dark blue damask, embroidered with broad light stems, and pink leaves, and cloth of gold shields, bearing the four "Amens," which answer to the text Rev. v. 13, which forms the whole design of the super-frontal.



30. THE CENTRE OF A FRONTAL.

This is worked in plain and raised gold, with square leaves of pink *appliqué* between the Latin words: "*Sedenti in throno, et agno, benedictio, et honor, et gloria, et potestas in secula seculorum.*"

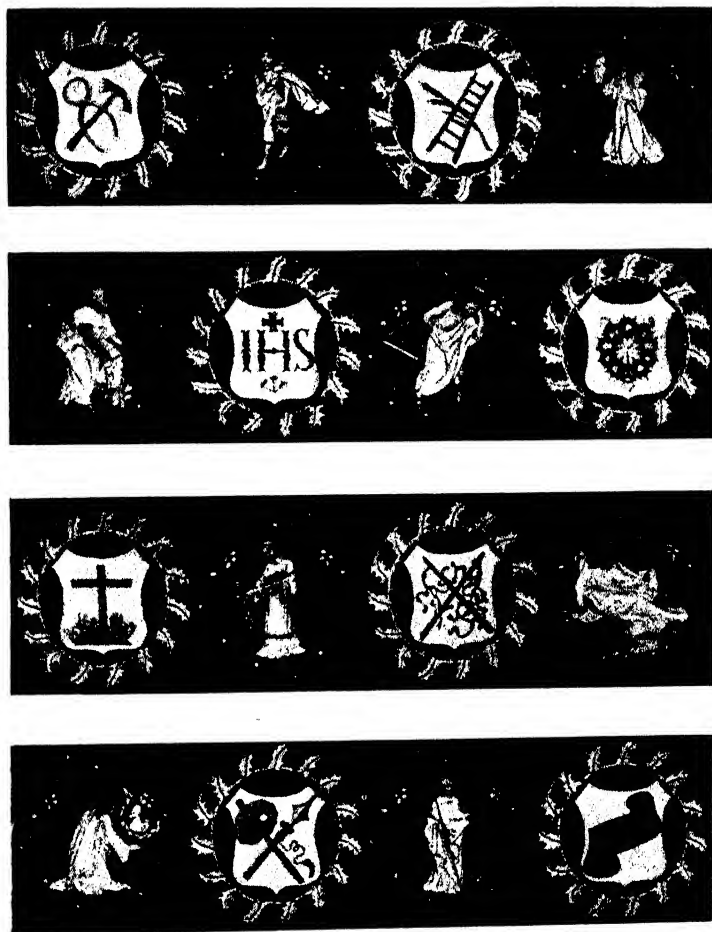
No. 30 is only the centre of an altar frontal. The panels at the sides can be made any width. If for

a large altar they can be embroidered, or for a small one there can be velvet bands only.

The cross is worked in gold and silks on one of the figured damasks used by the Society. The original was on white, but it can also be done on a red ground.

We have given many specimens of frontals, almost all of which can be adapted for the different seasons of the Church's year. We will, therefore, conclude with No. 31, a somewhat original treatment of a Lenten frontal embodying

the Symbols of the Passion. The ground, of course, is purple, and the colours predominating in the work are red and gold. The two upper rows of our illustration are on the left hand of the frontal, the two lower on the right, and the whole is separated by a cross, executed in the same colours.

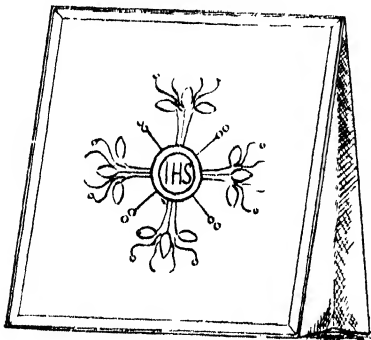
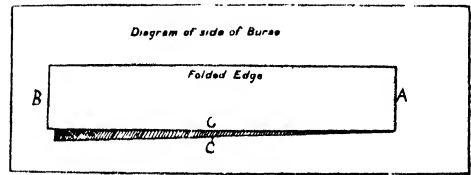


31. SYMBOLS OF THE PASSION.



## V. The Burse, Chalice Veil, and Book-markers.

THE burse, chalice veil, and book-markers require to be made of the same silk or brocade, to match the frontal in use according to the seasons, and are worked in embroidery like the other fittings required. The burse is used to carry the fine white chalice veil, corporal and pall, to the altar at the time of celebration, and is placed on the top of the chalice, which is then veiled in colour, as will be explained farther on. It is in reality a square case or pocket in which the linen named is laid when not in use.

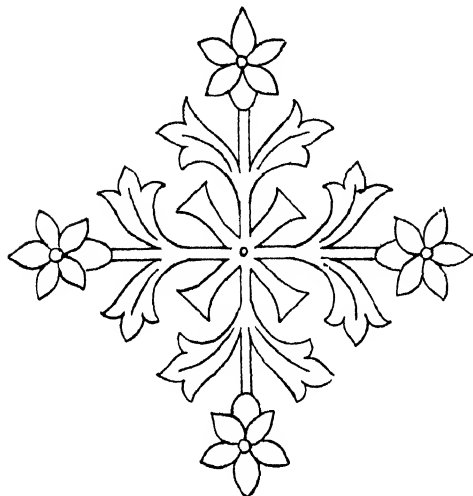


BURSE.

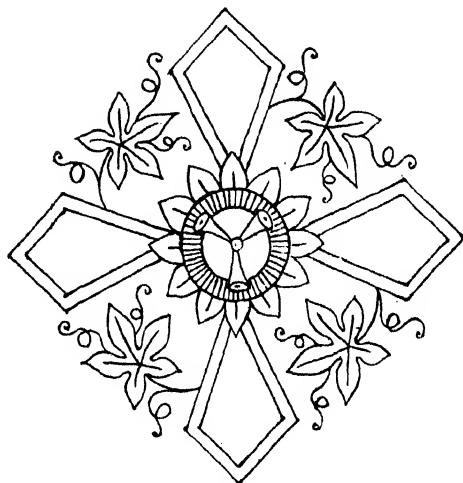
There are two ways of mounting the burse. The first used to be most generally preferred, but lately the simpler make seems to be more liked. Of course, the material must be of silk or brocade in each of the colours, and when mounted the size should be exactly nine inches square.

It is not right to overload the burse with a very large or heavy design; three inches should be the limit in width and

depth, and the work is only on one side. It must be worked in a frame, prepared and stretched as before described, and when

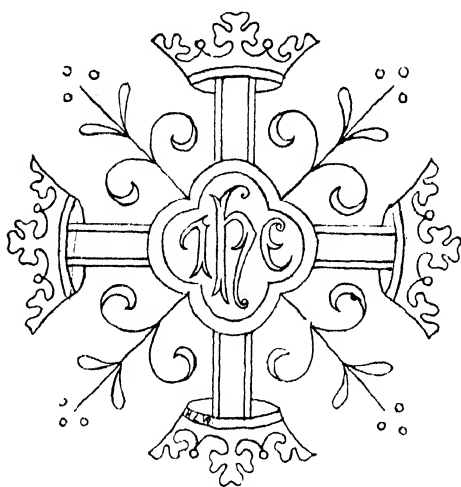


1. DESIGN FOR BURSE.

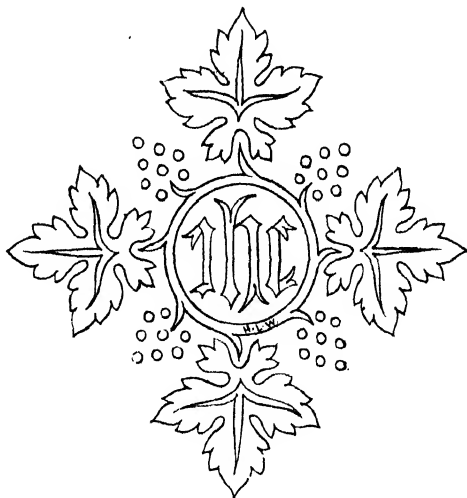


2. DESIGN FOR BURSE.

complete the mounting is very simple. The first shape is in reality a square pocket with expanding sides. Cut two pieces of



3. DESIGN FOR BURSE.

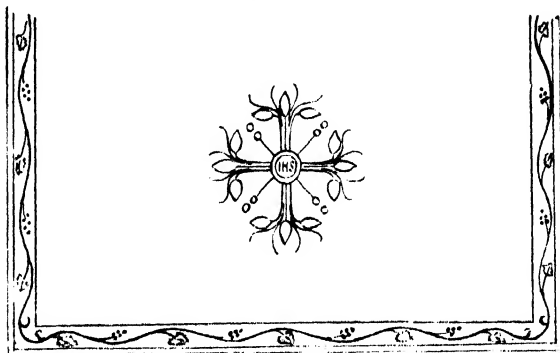


4. DESIGN FOR BURSE.

cardboard nine inches square, cover each piece separately with the silk or brocade (one of which is worked) on one side and fine

## 64 English Church Needlework.

white linen on the other. For the sides take two pieces of silk nine and a half inches long and three wide (to allow for turning), neatly hem the bottom of each piece, fold lengthways in half and sew together at (A), leaving open at (B); do this to each. Then sew the edges (C and C) separately on each side



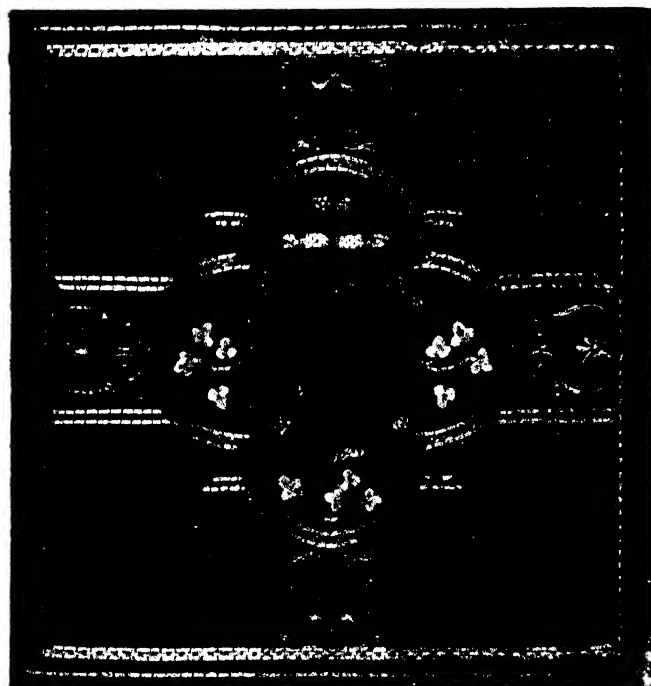
5. WORKED HALF OF A SILK CHALICE VEIL.

to the cards already covered; it will then be seen that the top edges of the burse are brought together, and these must

then be oversewn, at the same time carefully taking in the top of the side pieces; the drawing of the finished burse shows how this comes out, and allows of its standing against the super-altar.

A very narrow cord is put round the burse as a finish.

The other shape is prepared in the same way. Only

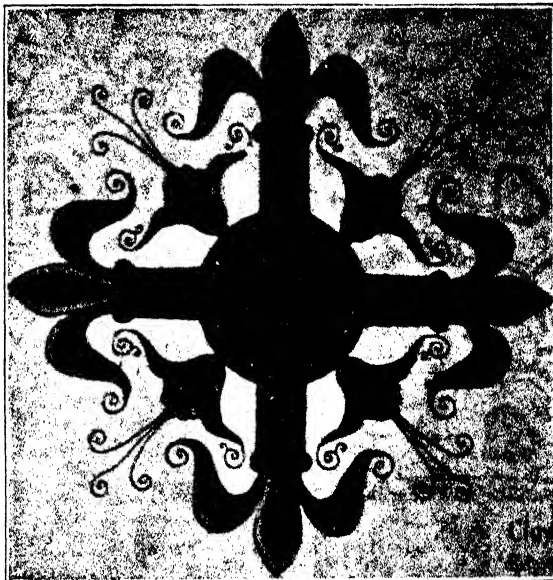


7. A WHITE CHALICE VEIL.

when both pieces of cardboard are covered and lined, they are

simply joined together at the back so that they will equally shut like a book or lay flat when open. A very narrow cord is required as a finish.

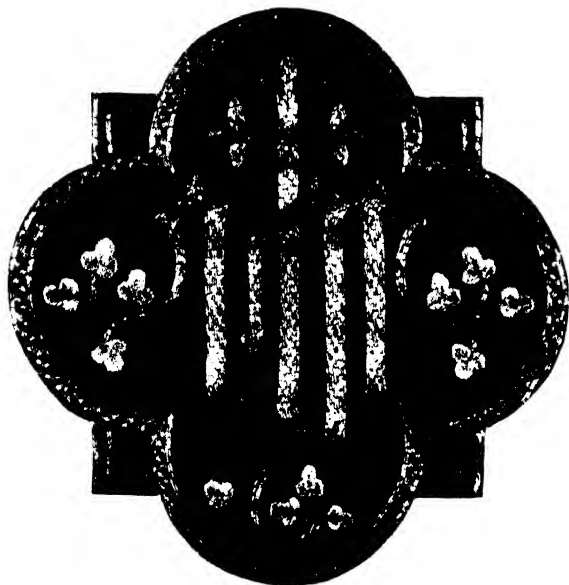
Some misapprehension exists as to chalice veils. There are, in fact, two veils. One of very fine lawn or cambric will be included in the directions for making a complete set of altar linen, but when carried by the celebrant to the sanctuary, the



8. WORKED CROSS FOR A CHALICE VEIL.

chalice is covered by a coloured silk veil, which should be

twenty inches square, and the cross which is embroidered on it is not in the centre but on one side. When the cross has been worked, as in No. 5, the veil must be finished by a row of narrow gimp laid flat upon the edge. This gimp is specially made for ecclesiastical purposes. The veil is then lined with a very soft thin silk.

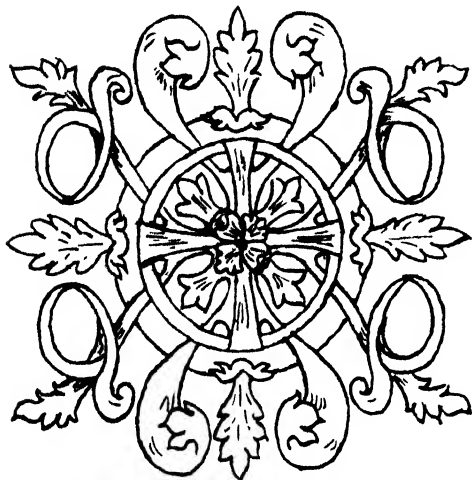


9. THE CENTRE OF A BURSE IN GREEN BROCADE.

Sometimes a pall is

## 66 English Church Needlework.

also made in colours to lay upon the top of the chalice, under the veil, and this is only a square of cardboard about six or seven inches square, with a small cross in the centre and a lining of white lawn.



10. DESIGN FOR WHITE BURSE AND VEIL.

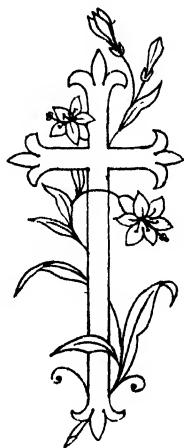
Some beautiful designs for chalice veils may be seen in "Designs for Church Embroidery," by A. R., but they are too elaborate for the average worker. One in particular has the *Agnus Dei* in the centre, upheld by four angels, who have cast down their musical instruments, and are

standing upon them, grasping instead the instruments of the Passion. Four streams, emanating from the *Agnus Dei*, suggest the Psalmist's words: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God."

No. 9 is an example of a burse in green brocade, on which is outlined, also in green, a close Greek fret. The cross is outlined with scarlet and gold, thus forming an effective contrast to the outline of the quatrefoil, which is in blue and gold. The monogram is in gold thread, the tiny vine leaves being worked with white filoselle, shaded to pale gold colour.

No. 10 is a simple but effective design from an Anglo-Saxon MS. and may be worked upon both burse and veil, the groundwork being white, entirely covered with an outlined pattern of gold.

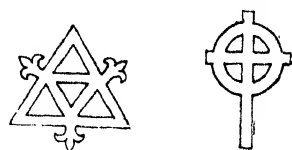
Book-markers are worked on ribbon specially sold for



11. DESIGN FOR MARKER.

the purpose, and two widths are required for a set, as the altar books are smaller than the Bibles on the lecterns, and the markers must be in proportion.

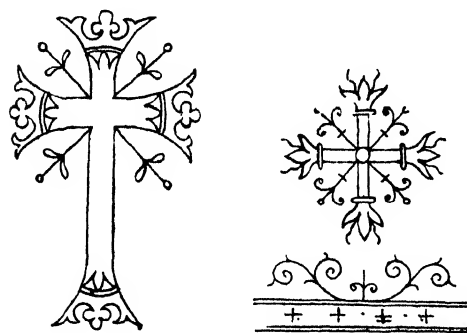
The simpler the embroidered design the better, for the widest ribbon sold for markers is too narrow for anything but the plainest characters. A Latin



12. DESIGNS FOR MARKERS.

cross at one end and a simple monogram on the other are always good, if correctly drawn, and, if preferred, the words "Creed" and "Collect," as suited to the different parts of

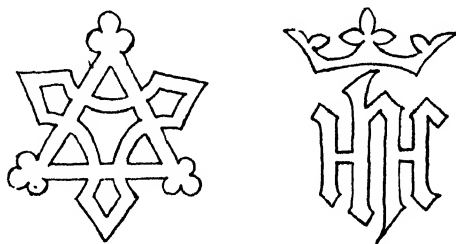
the service, may be worked on the different ends in plain old English letters, surmounted by a Greek cross.



13. DESIGNS FOR MARKERS.

large altar books a yard is the ordinary length, *exclusive* of the fringe. This makes a double marker, being divided by a barrel or register, and so falling over two pages of the book.

For a Church-marker of the ordinary  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inch width, a yard and a quarter of ribbon will be required. After securing some ten inches of the ribbon to the linen in the frame by tacking it along the



14. DESIGNS FOR MARKERS.

extreme edge, fix the design at five inches from the end, and work in gold, silver or silk as desired. Cover from dust,

## 68 English Church Needlework.

tack on the other end, and work as before, remembering that the two designs must not be worked on the same *side* of the ribbon, or the marker will not lie rightly in the book. When both ends are finished, detach the ribbon from the frame. Turn back four and a half inches of the plain end, *below* the work, over the untidy wrong side, leaving half an inch of plain ribbon *below* the design on the right side.

The ribbon must now be sewn together by the two edges to the depth of four and a half inches; it must be done with small stitches, using fine silk of the exact shade of the ribbon.

The raw edge of the turned up end is to be hemmed across above the design, the stitches to be invisible on the right side; for this purpose a very fine needle must be used.

A soft twist silk fringe of two inches is best to use, if the embroidery is of silk.

Twice the length of the two ends and three inches over for turnings will be required.

So that the sides should be perfectly neat and alike the fringe should be sewn along one side of the marker singly, then turned and sewn on the other.

The height of a design for a book-marker should not be more than three inches. On white ribbon, gold embroidery looks best; on violet, white; the other colours according to taste.

## VI. On Pulpit and Desk Hangings.

N EARLY all the fittings most generally required, and which are carried out in silk embroidery on silks, brocades, or stuffs, have now been considered. Pulpit and desk hangings yet remain to be mentioned; but for these it is quite impossible to lay down any rule as to the exact size and shape, for these must always depend upon the construction and dimensions of the pulpit to be supplied.

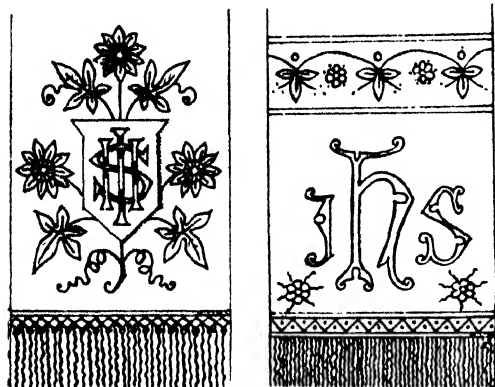
Taken generally, it is safe to say that the simple straight piece of material embroidered with any of the subjoined designs will be found to suit the requirements of most churches; the ends may be cut straight or in points, and must always have fringe to finish the edges. A brass desk is usually fitted to the pulpit, standing up some inches above it, and for this the hangings are worked. In mounting one when worked it is necessary to cut a piece of Bristol board the exact size of the ledge of the desk, cover it with the same material upon which the design is worked, and then neatly sew the hanging to the edge. To ensure the safety of the hangings it is necessary to sew a piece of elastic about half an inch wide at the back of the covered board which passes under the ledge and keeps the drapery in its place.

Having decided upon the design, proceed to frame the work with Church holland lining, stretching it well before



# 70 English Church Needlework.

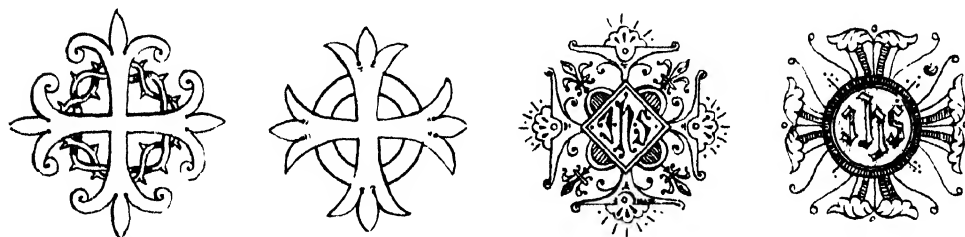
beginning to work. Long and short stitch, satin stitch, bricking, and couching can be used in almost all these designs.



1. SIMPLE DESIGNS FOR DESK HANGINGS.

and size must necessitate slight deviations. The actual shape is always quite straight, and the ends should be finished with a fringe made to match the material and embroidery.

Roman satin is a material on which such hangings are often worked, but it is not to be got in all the true ecclesiastical colours, and is, moreover, somewhat of a "sham." Woollen stuffs as suitable foundations for work are, of course, also inferior; but, if economy is a necessity, they can be used,



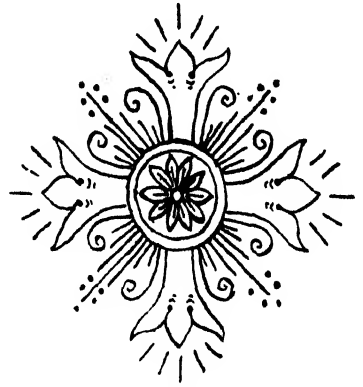
2. SUITABLE FOR TRANSFER.

3. FOR EMBROIDERY.

provided that the worker be content with very simple designs, and be extremely careful in the choice of the material—I mean, as to evenness and firmness of texture.

All previous directions given have been for working the

designs upon the foundation, be it silk, velvet, plush, or brocade, but many large pieces of work have to be worked apart and subsequently transferred. Indeed, some workers find it so difficult to execute fine embroidery on the heavy fabrics, that they prefer the transfer plan. In this case the design is traced upon the linen specially sold for the purpose, which is stretched on the frame, and then embroidered in coloured silks, as if upon silk.



4. FOR EMBROIDERY.

Having finished the work, it is necessary, before taking it from the frame, to rub the back with a thin ordinary paste



5. FOR TRANSFER OR EMBROIDERY.

to stiffen the work, and then wait till it is perfectly dry. Cut it out of the frame with a small margin, and place this upon

the groundwork material, which must have been stretched in the frame. Tack it on very carefully, stitching all round the design. Then make an edge by laying a strand of rather thick black purse silk or filoselle, sewing it down with fine sewing silk at regular intervals. Red or yellow is sometimes preferred to black. Gold thread is also sometimes the best finish.

This plan of transferring the work is suitable for very large altar frontals, superfrontals, and banners, upon which the design is "powdered"—that is to say, a number of small sprays, emblems, monograms, or initials are placed at intervals upon the foundation ground.

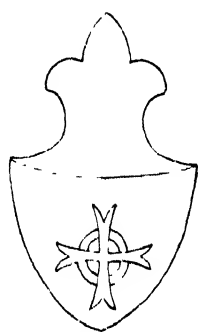
There are, of course, less elaborate designs, and some which, while looking most intricate, owe much of their effect to the manufacture of the brocade on which they are executed. No. 5 illustrates this. Its grounding is of pale cream-coloured brocade, the stems being of green filoselle, edged with gold thread. The small leaves are particularly happily chosen as to colour, the base being green, shaded to a dead white at the points, the whole outlined with gold. The flowers of the central design are in shaded rose filoselle, heavily outlined in gold, the centres being light blue. The other flowers are also in rose pink, but the points are in deep blue, outlined with gold, and the lower leaves are dead green, shaded to white.

The design is well raised, and is most effective in every way. The whole is edged with a fringe of gold, blue, rose, and white.

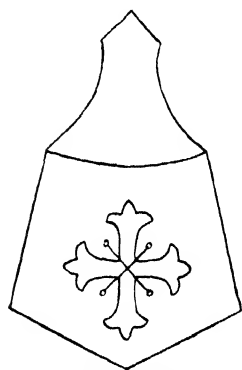
## VII. On Alms Bags.

THE alms bags used in all churches where the old-fashioned open plates are disused are really the simplest of all the articles to be worked. They should be made in all the different ecclesiastical colours, matching the frontals and hangings which are in use according to the season.

There is really not much variety in shape, and the large diagram shows the way to cut one out. Three pieces of the material are required, two are cut exactly the same size and they do not require a stiff lining, only sufficient to give a little substance to them when made up.



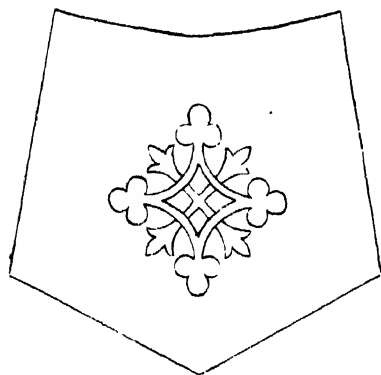
1. ALMS BAG.



2. ALMS BAG.

The third is for the outside pocket, which is to be embroidered with one of the designs given, and may be more or less elaborate according to taste, only remembering that the violet alms bags for use in Lent should have the simplest design, as it is only worked in white with a thread of red at the edge. For Easter and great festivals the white alms bags may be worked in gold and other colours according to the design. The material suitable is either cloth, silk, brocade or velvet, and if it is found impossible to provide all the colours, a set worked on a

right-coloured cloth is often found sufficient. The front piece of silk must be mounted and stretched on holland just as has been directed for stoles.



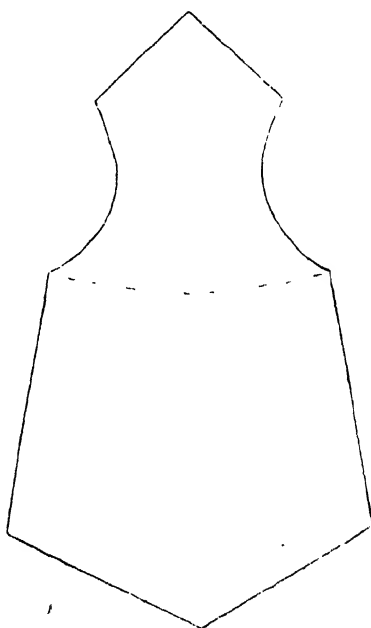
3. ALMS BAG.

The ordinary size alms bag should measure six inches at the widest part, and nine and a half inches from the point to the bottom of the bag. When the embroidery is finished it should be made up—the two back pieces joined by slip-stitching, a thin lining cut the required size for front pocket,

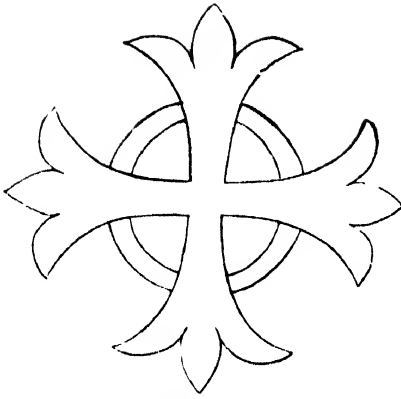
and the embroidered material neatly turned in and sewn in the same way. It is most important to have a wash leather lining to the pocket carefully sewn in, as the constant reception of coins, especially if of copper, soon ruins any other material.

When the sewing and lining is finished the pocket must be joined neatly to the back, and then finished all round by adding a narrow cord to match the material. In some churches they have adopted the plan of mounting the bags on a handle of wood, or brass, to avoid the constant passing the delicate materials from hand to hand. The

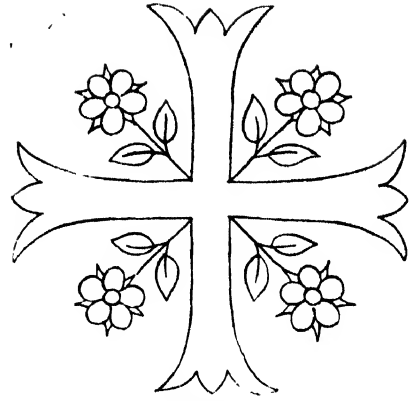
handles can be procured at any of the ecclesiastical shops, and then the bags are made without the lengthened back piece, cutting instead the back exactly like



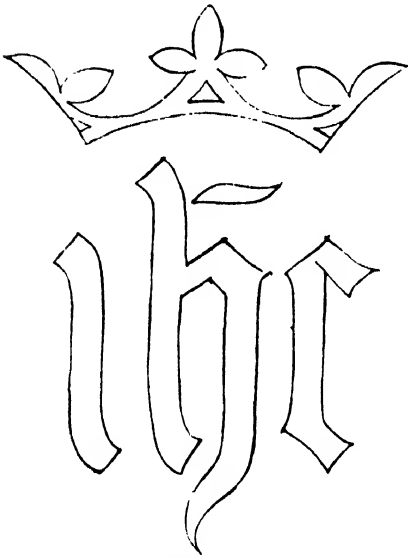
4. DIAGRAM OF ALMS BAG.



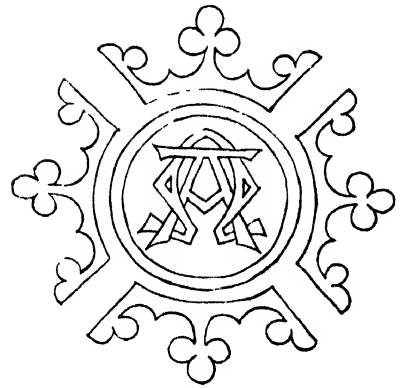
No. 5.



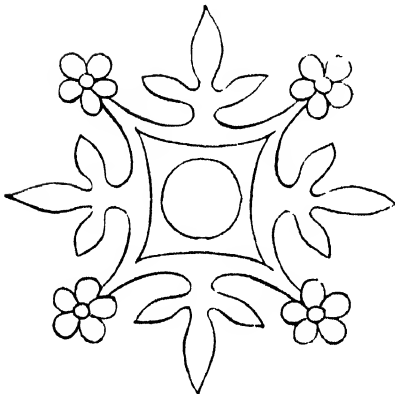
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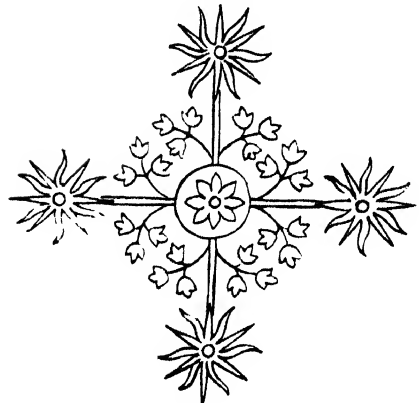
No. 6.



No. 9.



No. 7.



No. 10.



the front and allowing a space for the handle to slip through, or sew the pocket on to it.

For those unable to master the difficulties of embroidering designs on the material, it is possible to buy some suitable designs carefully worked and then to *appliqué* them on. This is done by carefully tacking the design all round the edge and then laying on a thread or double thread of Japanese gold, or *filoselle* as a finish.

Many designs embroidered in the great schools of work are obliged to be worked first and then *appliqué*. There are some very elaborate designs which it would be impossible to work on the rich background material, and of course this may be done for alms bags by those unable to undertake more elaborate work. Again, there are correct designs to be bought in cloth, which look very well when worked on the bags. The best way to cover the designs (when fixed on to the material in a frame) is to work them over with very close satin stitch, being careful not to sew through the felt, but to bring the needle up and put it in again close to the edge. When the satin stitch is finished it should look very bright, glossy and even, and the design must then be edged either with gold thread or purse silk.



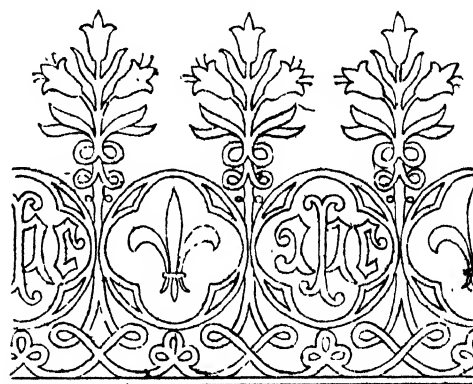
## VIII. On Altar Linen.

THE linen that is required for altar use in every church affords a good opportunity for working some of the most necessary adjuncts to the service of the sanctuary, and it can be undertaken by those who, being only very neat needlewomen, do not feel capable of undertaking the more elaborate embroidery that must be done on coloured materials, and with many shades of silk and golden thread.

It is hardly necessary to say that all altar linen must be worked upon the finest and best material that will bear frequent washing. Fine Irish linen, Scotch and French lawn or cambric are all suitable, and these different materials can be procured in several qualities. In choosing the material it is well to consider the design in view for working on it, as if the pattern be large and heavy in design it must not be worked on a material which is very light and thin. The fine linen suitable for most purposes is procurable at the best Irish depôts or at any good linen warehouse, and varies in price from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* a yard; it is to be had in widths of twenty-two or thirty-six inches, and at this price the quality will be most suitable, being not too heavy in make, and yet sufficiently so to carry a bold design.

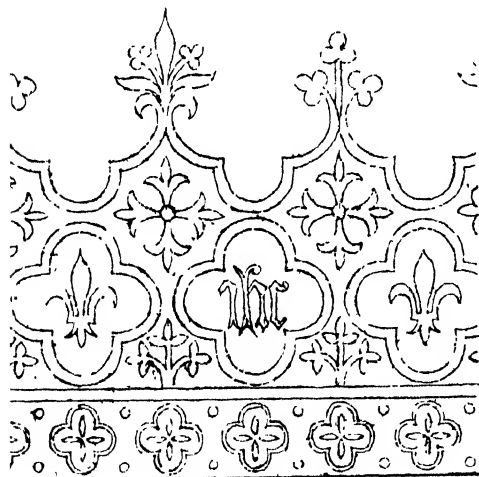
A very fine French cambric would cost from 12*s.* to 14*s.* a yard, and would be used for making a chalice veil,

which must be worked in a very delicate and appropriate design. The purificators, the pall, and corporals, as well as the cloth which is required to cover the credence table, should be cut from the same material as that which is chosen for the "fair linen," which is, of course, the largest and most important piece of the required set.



1. FAIR LINEN.  
*Worked in chain stitch.*

A complete set for altar use consists of the following articles:—The fair linen cloth, a cloth for the credence table, two corporals, four purificators, a pall, and a chalice veil. The fair linen must be exactly the width of the altar for which it is intended, and it must be long enough to fall



2. FAIR LINEN.  
*Satin stitch and outline stitch.*

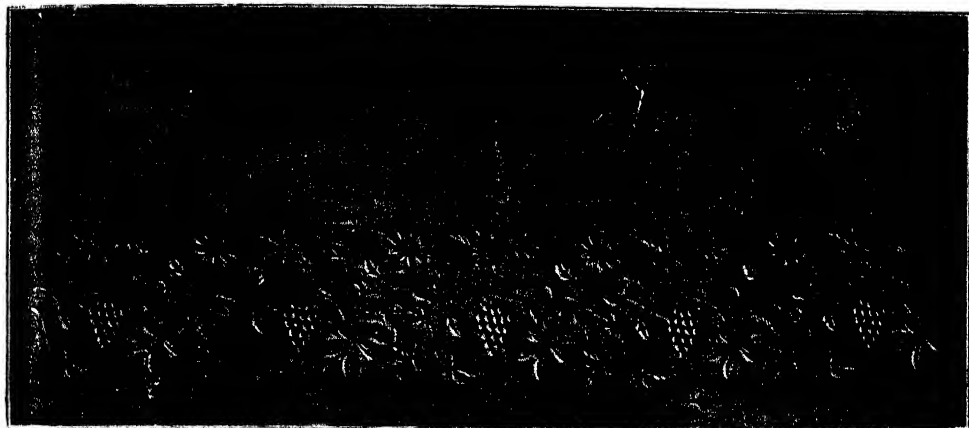
down about half-way to the ground at each end. If, therefore, the altar be narrow, and the linen is wide, it can be cut with no waste of material, as, after taking off the required width for the fair linen, a strip is left that is quite wide enough to allow for the smaller articles to be cut from it.

Having made sure of the exact measurements, and cut off the necessary length, make a very neat hem, a quarter of an inch wide, down the whole length. The hem at each

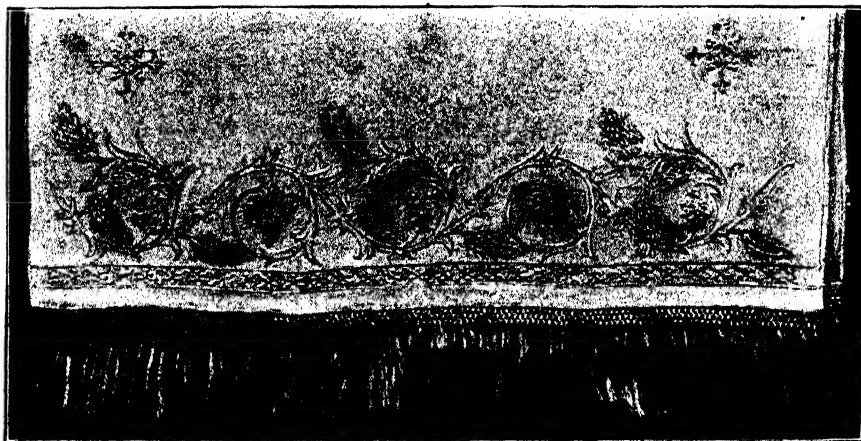
## 80 English Church Needlework.

end should be wider, not less than half an inch. These ends are usually embroidered in white only, though there is no objection to their being worked in red, and when well worked in a suitable design the effect is good. I have given several designs, but they must, of course, be chosen according to the size of the cloth, and they should always be symbolical or conventional. No. 3 is photographed from a very beautiful fair linen cloth executed by Messrs. Helbrunner. The stems are worked in outline stitch, and the leaves, fruit, and passion flowers in raised satin stitch. No. 4 shows a somewhat similar design with a narrow border, and the correct make of fringe required. Nos. 1, 2, and 3 are outline designs more or less elaborate, and could be worked effectively in chain stitch. Three very good designs to be worked on the palls are also given.

The pattern must be traced or transferred on to the linen—and this embroidery is not stretched and worked in a frame, but is worked in the hand. If, however, such a pattern as No. 3 is being worked with a good deal of satin stitch in its design, it is advisable to have one of the small tambour frames sold at all work depôts. These frames are two thin wooden hoops which fit over each other, just allowing room to slip the piece of linen to be worked over the smallest hoop, which is then kept well stretched and tight by passing the other hoop on to it. Supposing the pattern No. 3 was in hand, with the outlined design enriched with the leaves, fruit, and corn to be worked in satin stitch, the hoops would be placed over that particular part of the work and, when finished, the hoops removed till again required. The frames cost from one to two shillings, and can be had in different sizes. These minute directions are given for the more elaborate designs, but it is quite



3. FAIR LINEN.  
*Worked in satin and stem stitch.*



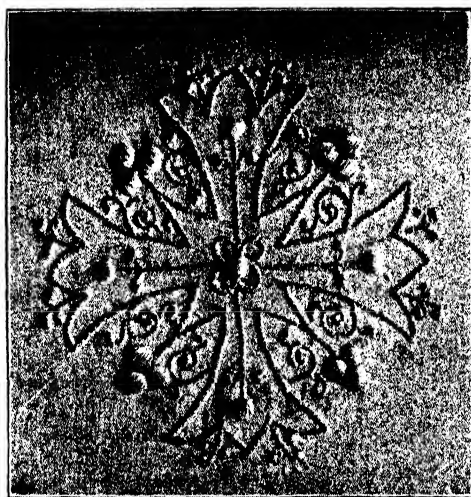
4. FAIR LINEN.  
*Showing fringed end worked in satin stitch.*



5. FAIR LINEN.  
*Grapes and leaves in satin stitch; tendrils and stems in outline or stem stitch.*

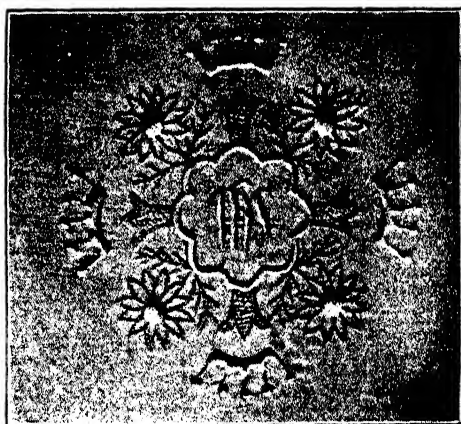


admissible and suitable to work the whole pattern in chain stitch, using the very best embroidery cotton that can be got. The whole success of chain stitch embroidery consists in the perfect regularity of each stitch, and the fact that the cotton has been chosen with due regard to the texture of the material upon which it is to be worked. If the cotton be too thick it will look heavy. Arden's embroidery cotton or that made by Baylis & Co. may be thoroughly relied upon.



6. PALL.

*Worked in chain and satin stitch.*



7. PALL.

*Worked in chain and satin stitch.*

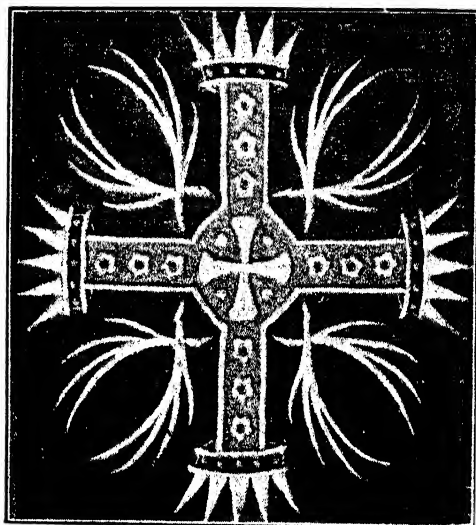
Attempts have been made to work the altar linen in silk, but it cannot be recommended. Good effects have been obtained by working the pattern with the best ingrained cotton, and if this is approved for the fair linen the whole set must be done alike in the same colour. Crimsons and blues are the most approved colours for linen embroidery. Green and lilac have been employed, but no good shades can be found in ingrain cotton, and in flax the best I have seen wash but badly. It is, therefore, better to avoid them.

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There are but few stitches that can ever be introduced into white embroidery; out-line stitch is generally used for the stems, and most people employ satin stitch or a modified crewel stitch for the other parts of the work.

I will now give some details as to the size and working of the other articles required for a complete set of altar linen.

The corporals are usually twenty-one inches in width and twenty-four in length, and the cross or small design

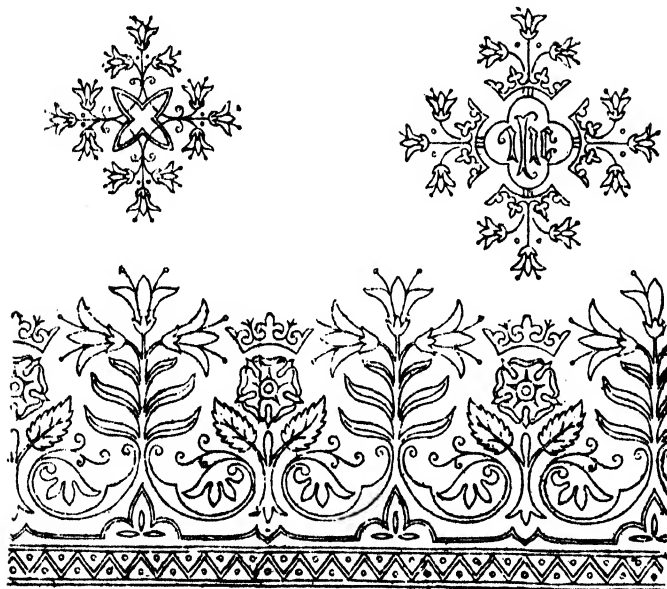


8. PALL.

*Worked entirely in satin stitch.*

is to be worked on them, but *not* in the true centre, as it must be in the middle of one half. These may be simply hemmed, hemstitched, embroidered on the hem, or edged with lace, according to taste.

The purificators must measure eleven to thirteen



9. FAIR LINEN.

*Worked in stem and satin stitch.*

inches square, and have a small cross worked in the centre.

The pall is a square, generally six inches across, and may be embroidered more or less elaborately according to taste. The designs given are particularly good, and No. 8, with the palm branches, is very artistic, and should be worked entirely in satin stitch, one of the hoop frames being used while in hand; Nos. 6 and 7 are also effective, and it will be seen that the last of these can be done in chain stitch, satin stitch being only introduced in the corners, centre, and ends of the inner cross.

Great care is needed not only in tracing the pattern, but in grounding before working.

It is, however, not absolutely necessary to work



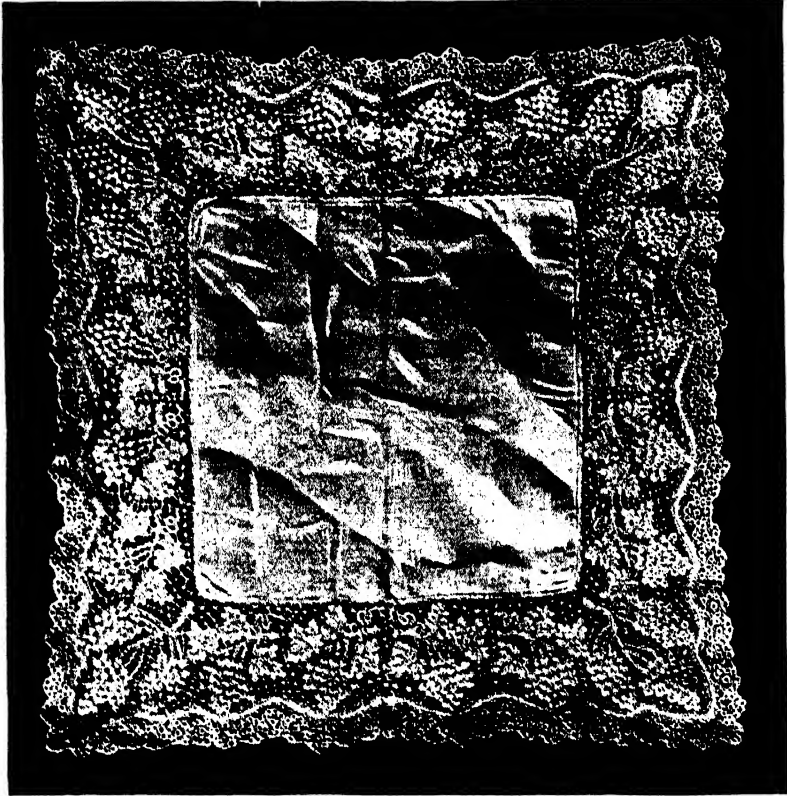
10. FAIR LINEN.  
*Worked in satin stitch.*

more than a cross in the centre. A piece of cardboard must be cut six inches square, and the work mounted on one side, while a piece of plain linen or lawn is sewn over the back; the edges must be very carefully sewn together, and the whole is finished by the very narrowest edging of lace or finest white cord.

The credence cloth may hang to the ground at either end, or fall over to the depth of five inches, as along the front. In many instances the cloth for the credence table is as elaborately embroidered as that for the altar itself, but it is more usually hemstitched above a hem one inch wide, and ornamented with a narrow pattern worked in chain or satin stitch.



A description of a chalice veil has been already given ; this applied mainly to the *silk* veil, which generally accompanies that of lawn or cambric, but the dimensions and method of working are the same. It will, therefore, only be necessary to say that in the set of altar linen the chalice veil should

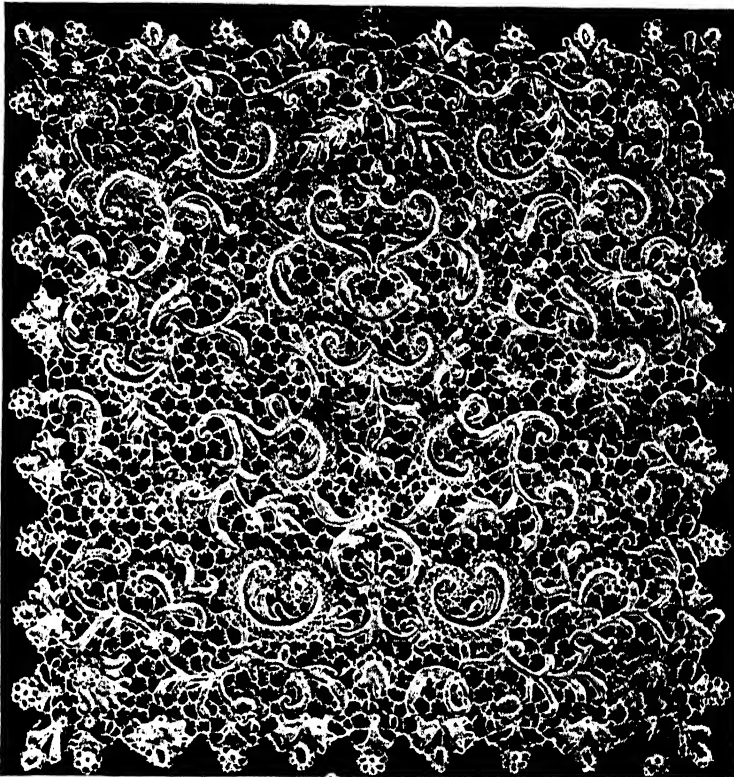


II. A CHALICE VEIL.

be made of the most delicate fabric, lawn, cambric, or grass cloth, and embroidered with any suitable design. The size, as in the case of the veil, varies, but twenty-three inches square is considered best, and a very fine lace should be sewn round the edge. Some of the chalice veils worked abroad have very elaborate designs as borders or centres ;

but if the material is very fine in quality, with some good lace at the edge, a well-worked cross in the centre is quite suitable, and is often to be preferred.

It will be seen that in most of the illustrations given the stitches used are either chain, outline, or satin stitch; and if rapidity of execution is a necessity, the two first may



12. A PALL.

be used with success. They are, however, somewhat thin and poor, and with constant washing become flattened and pushed out of shape, which satin stitch never does.

With regard to this last, too great stress cannot be laid on the importance of good firm grounding. Like most other work, its ultimate success depends entirely on a careful

## 88      English Church Needlework.

preparation, not with long stitches which will waver when worked upon, but with even, systematic *surface* darning. If this is persevered with until the pattern stands high above the linen, the result will be work which will look better and better each time it is washed. The secret of satin stitch is not rapidity, but exactness of execution.

I have seen fine buttonholing used for raised flowers, etc., but do not advise it. It is just as much trouble as satin stitch, and is apt to wash out of shape. Stems, as already stated, are usually worked in stem or crewel stitch, but for stouter branching there are one or two others worth mentioning, notably a couched outline, with interior left either blank or finely darned; also wide buttonholing for either edge, the centre being darned across the stitches of the buttonholing.

Leaves can be treated in many ways, and the good vine leaf patterns obtainable offer wide scope for both invention and adaptation. Leaves of entire satin stitch are apt to be heavy, but this can be obviated by leaving the veins unworked, and I have seen some beautiful leaves half satin stitch and half outline, the interior of the outlined half being filled in with fine back stitching. The effect was wonderfully good.

In working the five crosses on a fair linen cloth, care should be taken to make them exactly even. They are generally worked in satin stitch, often with a clear centre. They are, however, not obligatory, and many people omit them altogether.

Linen fringe is most usual for edging the ends of a fair linen cloth, but this, again, is a matter of taste. Lace is often used, and beautiful borders can be made by turning up a deep hem, and drawing the threads half an inch, or one or two inches deep, and working as in drawn-linen work. The hem

can also be embroidered if preferred, or turned up and hem-stitched.

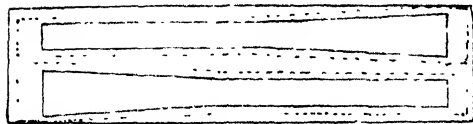
I do not propose to enter here upon the position of lace in Church needlework. The subject is far too large an one, and covers an extensive area, but those who can do such work, will find it much appreciated, and for chalice veils, many beautiful examples of lacework, quite suitable for imitation, may be found. I append examples of both chalice veil (11) and pall (12), the first having a border of Buckinghamshire pillow-case, worked in the design of the symbolical vine, the second in old Venetian Rose-point, of seventeenth century date.

## IX. On the Making and Embroidering of Stoles.

THE stoles for ordinary use are the most simple work that anyone can undertake, and though many of the designs now in use cannot claim to be of antique usage, there are many churches where only a small amount of ornament is admissible.

Ecclesiastically, the stole is described as a band of silk or stuff worn round the neck, the ends hanging down to the knees. It may not be generally known that the stole is symbolical of the yoke of Christ, and for this reason the priest kisses the cross worked on the back when he puts it on. Stoles vary in colour according to the Church's seasons, and are therefore to be worked on white, green, violet, and red. White is used on all great festivals except Whitsuntide (when red is used), green during Trinity and Epiphany, violet during Advent and Lent, and red for martyrs. On great festivals and other special occasions, stoles may be made of cloth of gold, or worked on an equally rich material. A black stole is used for funerals and on Good Friday. A baptismal stole should be equally embroidered on both sides, one of which should be violet and the other white. Stoles may be cut in either of two shapes. The graduated ends are more generally used than the spade ends.

For cutting out and working a violet stole in the usual shape, take a yard and a half of plain violet corded silk, twenty-seven inches wide. This is



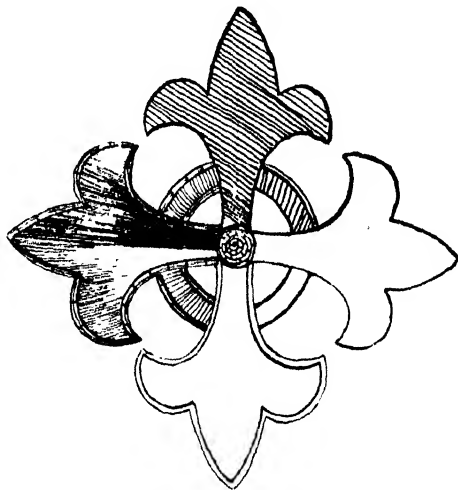
Width  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in. Fifty inches long. Width  $3\frac{1}{2}$  in.

1. DIAGRAM OF A STOLE.

for a stole measuring fifty inches in length each way from the centre of the back to the bottom of each end, the narrowest part at the neck

being three and a half inches, gradually increasing to five and a half inches at the ends. Lay a paper pattern of this exact measurement on the silk and cut out two pieces of the silk, allowing at least half an inch all round for turnings. If these pieces are cut very carefully, reversing the pattern so that the narrow part of one lies by the broad end of the other, it will be found that only half the width of silk has been used, thus leaving the second half for a second stole. The stoles are cut in two separate pieces to allow of their being afterwards carefully joined at an angle to secure its fitting well. This will be explained when describing the final mounting.

Having cut out the silk, next proceed to trace the design, suitable specimens of which will be found in this series. Transfer patterns are also procurable and save the labour of drawing them out.



2. CROSS.

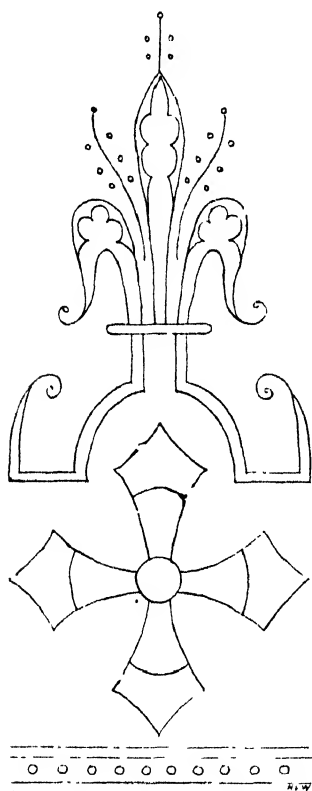
*Simple design.*

The next step is to prepare the frame for working. Take a piece of thick holland (specially sold for embroidery work) about

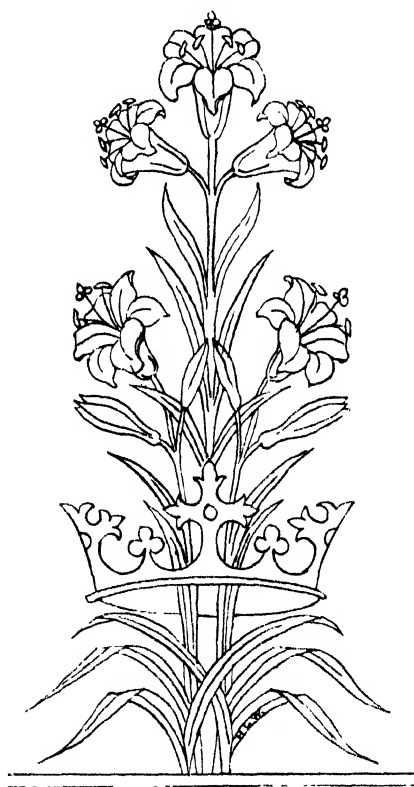
three-quarters of a yard square ; oversee this (top and bottom) to the webbing, turn a little piece under on each side for the lacing, take a turn or two on each roller, put in the stretchers and pull as tight as possible ; lace the holland with fine string on both sides till it is fully stretched. Take one half of the silk for the stole and fold it from the narrow end till close to where the working pattern begins, tightly tacking the folded silk to keep it secure while working. Now lay the folded stole on the holland, leaving room for the other half ; it must be very smooth before it can be tacked on to the holland and the tacking must be done very closely. Do exactly the same with the other half, as by working both ends at the same time greater uniformity in working them can be ensured. Whether working on fine cloth, which may be used for stoles, on silk, or on brocade, the elementary stages of the work are the same, but when cutting out a material with a pattern design the pattern cannot be reversed and the two pieces must be cut side by side, or one half of the pattern would be running up and the other half would be running down.

The minute directions given for stretching and preparing the work may seem tedious and tiresome, but the whole success of all such embroidery entirely depends on its most careful preparation. The design may be either traced or transferred. The work is then ready to be commenced, and though every fresh design must be worked out differently in shading and colouring, the principals are the same, as well as the stitches. The most simple design is No. 2, which is a cross to be worked in white (shaded) and red, with gold edge. The materials used must be of the best quality, and as constant annoyance arises through cheap needles, the best make should always be secured. Long eyes and sharp points are wanted for the filo floss, small wool needles for

passing the gold and silver thread through; while short round-eyed ones work best when sewing silk is used. A stiletto or "piercer" should be at hand, as well as the sharpest pointed pair of scissors; many people prefer an ivory thimble, thinking it frays the silk less than silver. There are several kinds of silk used in embroidery. "Filo



3. CROSS.  
*More elaborate.*



No. 4.

floss" is mostly required, and can be obtained in all colours and shades; purse silk, filoselle, and very good sewing silk are all required. Gold and silver thread, when introduced, must be of the best quality, and any good embroidery warehouse will supply the tiny sequins or spangles which are sometimes added to the work.



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Having traced the design and decided upon the colours in which it is to be worked, it is important to have enough silks in hand of all the chosen shades, to avoid the difficulty of matching when half way in the work. A good eye for colour and an artistic appreciation of the harmony of shades is necessary, and anyone at the beginning of their apprenticeship in Church embroidery should study some of the best reproductions of antique needlework, which have been worked by skilled hands. Strong colours and decided contrasts must be avoided.

To continue practical directions. This design must be raised by what is technically called padding; but first take very fine white cotton and with small stitches follow most carefully the lines of the pattern traced. Now do the padding, which is done with very white, thick, and soft cotton sold for the purpose, taking care that the stitches go the reverse way to the embroidery afterwards worked over. Always begin from the outside, bring the needle up close to the end of preceding stitch, so that there is very little cotton at the back, and work this padding very evenly, and cover the design before beginning to work the silk. Having a smooth and even surface with this thick cotton, begin to work the first shade of white filo floss, taking three strands of the filo, and working from the outer edge in "long" and "short" stitch, as heretofore described. The second shade of silk should be worked, with only two strands of filo floss, very carefully dovetailing the stitches into the first shade, where spaces are left; this shade may be worked to the very centre of the cross, working the darkest shade *over* it judiciously. Before finishing the cross with its gold edging, the circle must be worked in red filo silk; this is to be done in satin stitch, having previously done the padding as before described.

## English Church Needle

floss, or, if preferred, with a double gold thread stitched down. Having finished this, take the frame by carefully cutting round the pattern embroidered design, and prepare to mount necessary to do this on a large table.

Having procured the holland sold for interlining, lay it on the table, and cut out the exact size of the original paper pattern, allowing the trifle required for joining at the neck. Then lay the embroidered stole, the

hollands, and, placing the holland interlining, tack it most carefully as far as the neck (already seamed), doing

at a time. Having thus tacked the lining, turn the edges of the silk over and tack down. Everything must

be checked before a stitch of sewing is upon this depends the correct finish. The lining of a violet stole should be of a very thin quality specially sold for this purpose may be got in all shades. The lining

cut the size of the silk, and join at the same angle. Lay the silk lining over the holland and tack through to the silk right up to the neck most carefully. Take fine violet sewing

and slip-stitch the silk lining to the holland. The stitches must be seen; the interlining

greatly prevents this. At the two corners of the silk and lining, and sew near the

the fringe. Twenty-four inches of fringe, the whole five inches wide, and it should be of the violet and white for this stole, and three

## ph Church Needlework.

e is sewn on all round the ends, joined at the  
ne beading just above the edge.

ion against the stole being soiled at the  
to take a piece of fine white cambric, about  
and tack it inside, turning it over on



No. 10



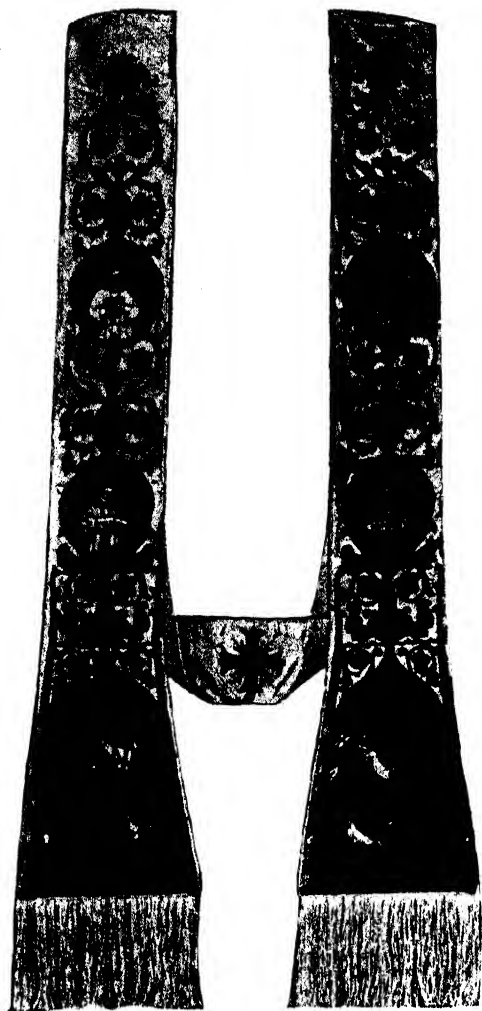
11. A GREEN STOLE.

t can then be taken off and washed when

o as to the examples given. No. 3 is a more  
of No. 2, and may be executed in the same

all on crimson, and is specially suitable for a  
to the Blessed Virgin. The lilies should be.

worked in white, shading to very pale pink, the leaves in three shades of tender green. The crown should be entirely of Japanese gold.



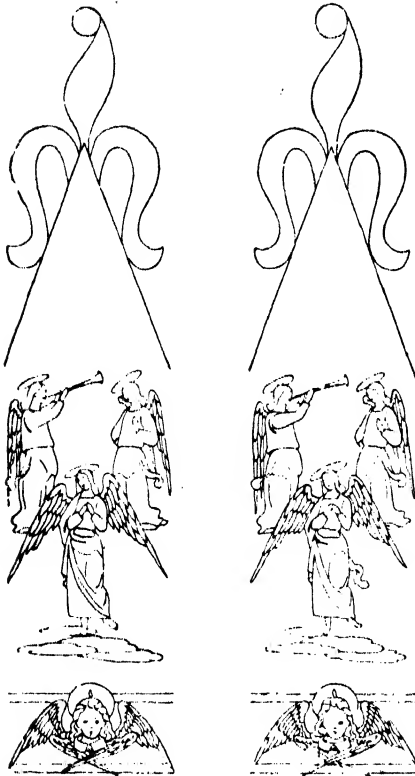
12. A WHITE SILK STOLE.

No. 5 is particularly graceful, and would be suitable for a violet stole.

Nos. 6 and 7 are for stoles with spade-ends. In the latter spangles or jewels may be introduced with good effect.

# 100 English Church Needlework.

No. 8 might have the letters and stem worked in gold ; the conventional foliage in shades of green or pale blue.



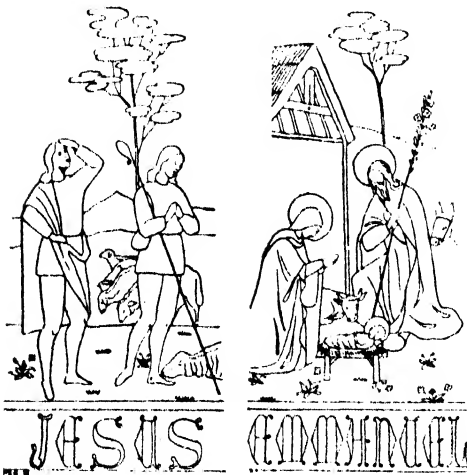
In No. 9 the grounding is of red damask, and the decoration consists for the most part of flames and palm leaves, the latter done in shades of grey-green from medium to very pale. The cross is of Japanese gold thread, done in basket stitch over cord, with flames proceeding from the centre, the centre itself being a jewel.

The cross rests on a shield of red satin in a deeper shade than the stole, crossed with fine Japanese gold thread.

The fringe is of red silk overlaid with Japanese gold thread.

No. 10 is in green damask silk. The circles are done in gold thread ; the larger ones enclosing pomegranates in shades of golden browns, the smaller ones crossed with Japanese gold thread caught down with red.

The leaves are in shades of green. The cross is in dark red overlaid with spangles, scrolls of gold thread proceeding from the centre.



The fringe is of green silk overlaid with Japanese gold thread.

No. 11 is also in green, of a large-patterned brocade, the cross being bordered above and below with a solid gold scroll-work. The cross is heavily edged with gold, inside which is a firm line of red. The remaining space is filled in with delicate blue feather stitch, while the centre is gold, filled in with red.

The fringe is a heavy one of crimson, red, blue and green.

In the hands of an experienced worker the result would also be beautiful if the grounding were made of white satin, and the scroll executed in gold upon a field of rose-colour, the feather stitching being worked in pale green.

No. 12 is a most original and beautiful design, white silk, and gained the first prize at the Spitalfields Silk Exhibition. The figures are taken from two well-known pictures, and the tracing work adapted from some mediæval illumina-

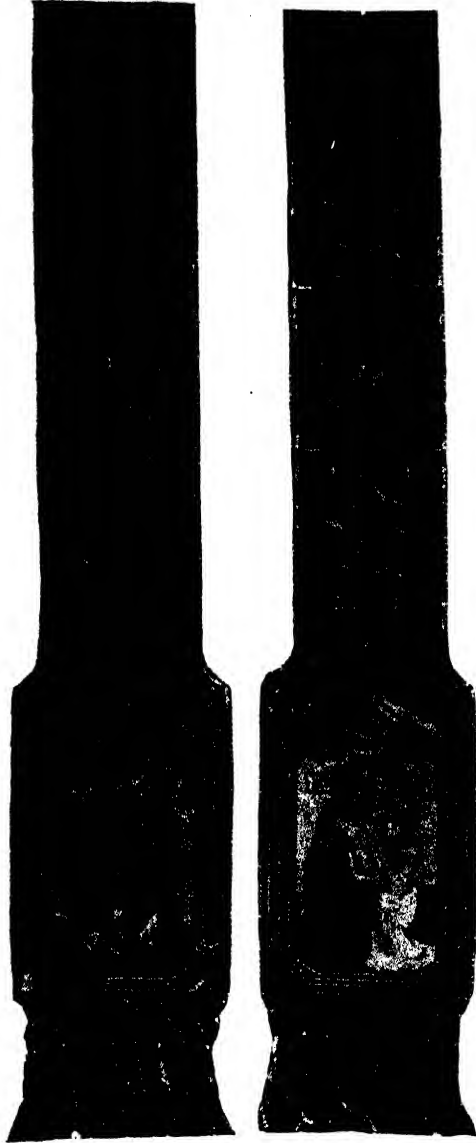


14. AN EASTER STOLE.

tions. On one end the figure work illustrates the meeting of our Blessed Lord with St. Mary Magdalene; on the other His greeting to St. Thomas.

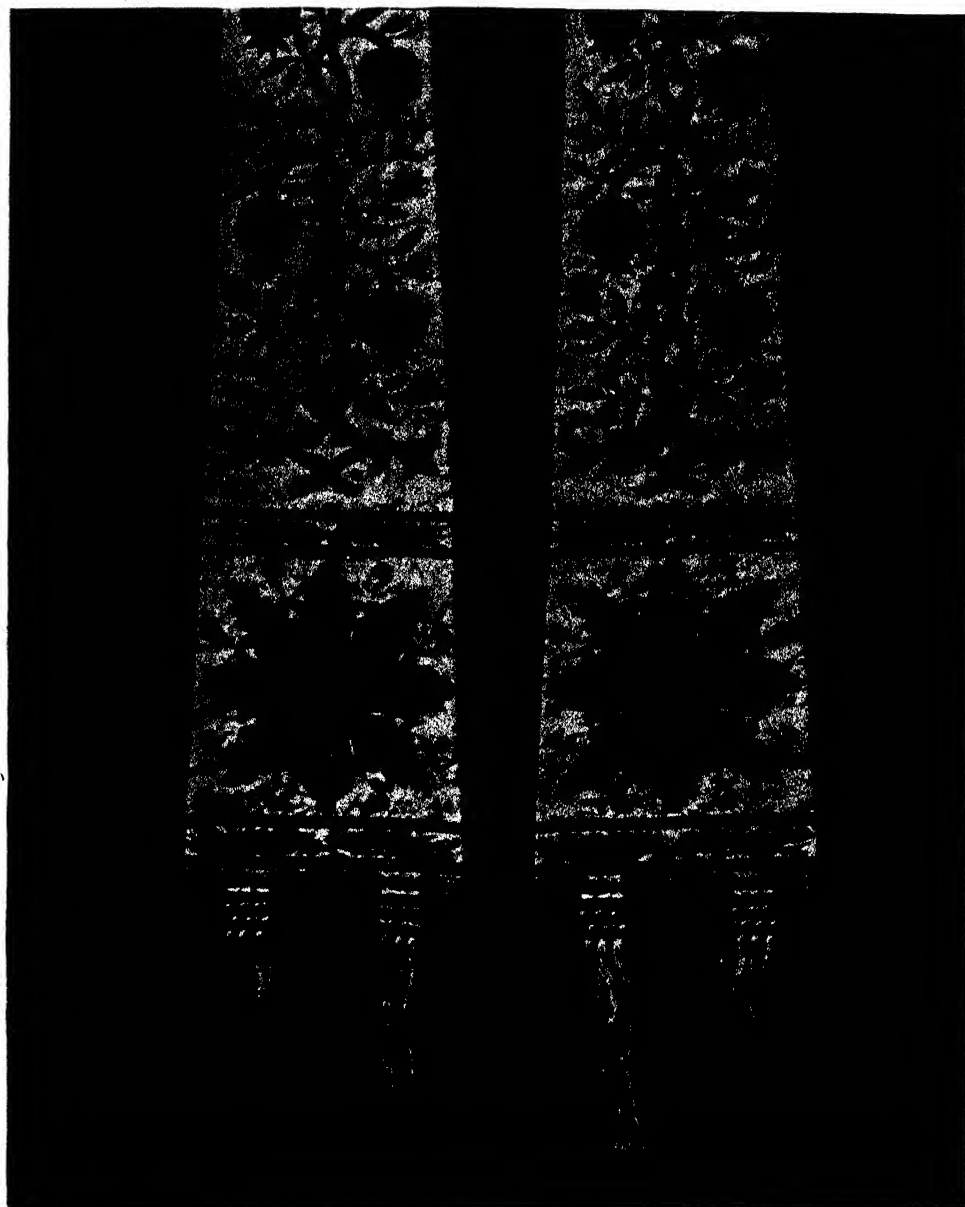
The pictured subject on the former shows the loving fervour of the penitent restrained by the "Touch me not;" the latter the loving doubt of the Apostle encouraged by the "Reach hither thy hand" (the words are rendered in Latin).

The colouring and drawing of both ends are admirably balanced. The figures stand against a silvery background, and the design is carried up the stole for about two feet in a rich tracery of flowers and foliage, which encircles two medallions of angels, the one for the St. Thomas end bearing a scroll with the legend, "Dominus meus et Deus meus;" the other for the St. Mary Magdalene end having on it "Maria Rabboni." The upper angel on each side plays a musical instrument.



15. A STOLE WITH SPADE ENDS.

The whole colouring is rather rich and bright, but very harmonious. The figure work is effected entirely by the



No. 16.









needle, and with none of the painted work used in modern Bruges work.

No. 13 is a good design for a Christmas stole, and is in white damask, the figures being either worked entirely in gold and silver, or in natural colours, with wings heavily outlined in gold.

The design can be carried out in *appliqué*, painting, or fine embroidery.

Nos. 16 and 17 are executed in white damask silk. The designs of both are good in every detail, and might be used for other groundings than white. In No. 17 the design of leaves and berries linking the medallions is worked in natural colours, the berries being purple.

The ends hold exquisitely worked figures of angels, carried out in very artistic colouring. In the one with the angel blowing the trumpet the drapery is worked in green, the wings are mauve shading into blue, the hair is red surmounted by a halo in crimson gold. The background is entirely covered with gold worked in diaper pattern, which has an extremely rich effect.

The scroll is in white with the lettering in black. The whole is surmounted by a canopy of which the background is dull green, and the scroll and powderings in gold and blue. The second angel has draperies of blue, showing long undersleeves worked in white, and at the neck a deep collar worked in gold. The wings are of flame-



18. A PENITENTIAL STOLE.

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colour, whilst the background and canopy, etc., are in the same rich gold and green as are those in the corresponding design.

No. 17 is also worked in natural colours, the rich shades of the pomegranates and their leaves having a very beautiful effect.

No. 18, a penitential stole, is, of course, of purple. At the top are thistles—the emblem of sin. “Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth” (the earth under the curse of sin). The thistles are worked in shades of heliotrope, with grey-green leaves. The words “Jesu Merci” are in red. Below are five small flowers in red, representing the five wounds of our Lord, surrounded by circles of thorns in gold silk. Below this is a thistle crowned—on a red cross—(the colour of redemption) representing sin overcome by the power of the Cross. The whole is heavily outlined in gold thread.

No. 19 gives only a faint idea of the portions still existing of the stole of St. Cuthbert, as found in his tomb in 1827. The grounding is of a rich reddish purple, and the embroidery, now faded and tarnished with the vicissitudes of 1,140 years, still indicates what its original beauty must have been.

Jewelled stoles are sometimes worked, and are very effective if judiciously done. They should be embroidered with only just enough colour to throw into relief the gold setting in which the jewels are placed.

A beautiful stole was shown at the Art Exhibition of the Church Congress of 1888, representing St. John the Evangelist at one end, and St. Aquinas at the other. St. John is represented with the Holy Spirit as a dove descending on him, and throwing rays of light on the Blessed

Sacrament, which is held in the Evangelist's right hand, while his left is raised in blessing.

An eagle, an open book, and a sword, round which is twined a serpent, being the emblems of the Apostles, are on the right, leaving place at his feet for a cherub, who, kneeling, holds an ink-horn and pen.

The embroidery for the other end of the stole is even better designed; it is more even and fills the space better. It represents St. Thomas Aquinas offering his book to the crucified Saviour, who is reaching one hand down to the saint. The legend is: "As



19. PORTIONS OF THE STOLE OF ST. CUTHBERT.

the clock struck the hour of twelve from the cloister bell, St. Thomas stood with his finished work in front of the altar, and offered it with a prayer of dedication to the

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Blessed Trinity. A companion, Domenico Casate, beheld him, while in fervent prayer, raised from the ground, while a voice from the crucifix cried, 'Thou hast written well of Me, Thomas. What recompence dost thou desire?' And the saint answered, 'No other than Thyself, O Lord.' "

## X. On Banners.

THE use of banners in festal processions is of very ancient origin.

In early English ritual two banners were used in procession on Ascension Day, with the quaint device of the lion and the dragon; and Bede relates that when St. Augustine came to England to begin his mission, he and his priests carried a silver cross and a banner while they sang the Litany. On the banner was a figure of Our Lord. Similar banners are now used in churches for festivals, and when the various guilds connected with the parish are represented in the procession.

So the gift of a handsome banner is often among the offerings made to a church; and if the building be dedicated to one of the saints, an emblematic design is chosen for the banner. For guilds it is best to select what is most appropriate to the intention of the particular society it represents.

Banners may be worked on any rich material of silken texture, or on very fine cloth. Serge is inadmissible, as, however well it may be worked, it never hangs satisfactorily. As a rule, the work is executed in a style that is beyond most amateurs, but I will give directions for one that is of the simplest design, and yet is effective.



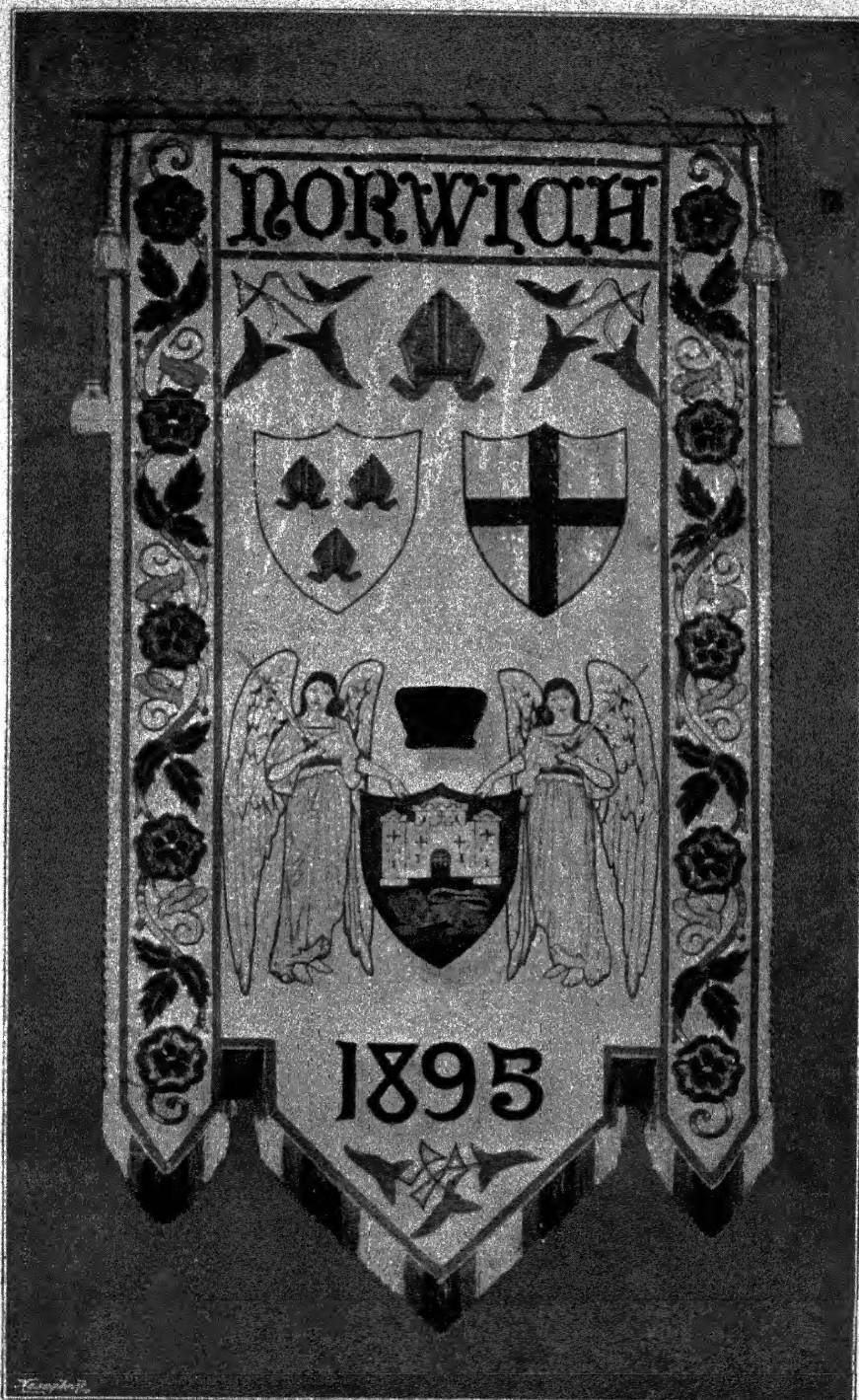
## 112 English Church Needlework.

It is worked on Roman satin, procurable fifty-two inches wide, at 4s. to 5s. per yard. For good proportion it should measure four feet by two feet nine inches, and therefore one yard and a quarter of the satin will cut the two pieces—one for the front, on which the design will be worked, the other for the “backing.”

Having decided whether to work your own design, or buy one of the best already worked, stretch the satin on a frame and proceed, according to the directions given in Chap. II. (p. 26), to apply, or draw, and prepare the design. A bold pattern of pink lilies with crown is effective, or a cross with sacred initials; and it must be remembered that as the work will be viewed from a distance, the bolder the design, the better will be the effect.

When the work is finished and ready for mounting, there should be two strips of velvet or plush, five inches wide and lined with soft silk, to mount as orphreys.

The mounting, of course, requires great care, and some experience of heavy work. There must be no less than three linings, all of a heavy linen or holland fabric. Lay the embroidered front face downwards on a large table, and cut two pieces of lining the exact size. Then tack these into the pieces of satin, and stitch them carefully at the edges. A middle lining is still required, and this should be of a heavier linen. On no account use anything of the nature of buckram, or the banner will not hang well. The middle and heaviest lining must be fastened to the front or back with strong stitches, and then the parts can be sewn together. A cord must edge the whole banner, and the orphreys can be sewn on at the sides, so as to fall to the edge, and fastened at the bottom. A double cord and tassels are required for each corner, and the



1. THE BANNER OF THE CHURCH CONGRESS AT NORWICH.



requisite brass rod and pole must be procured from one of the church-furnishing depôts. The bottom of the

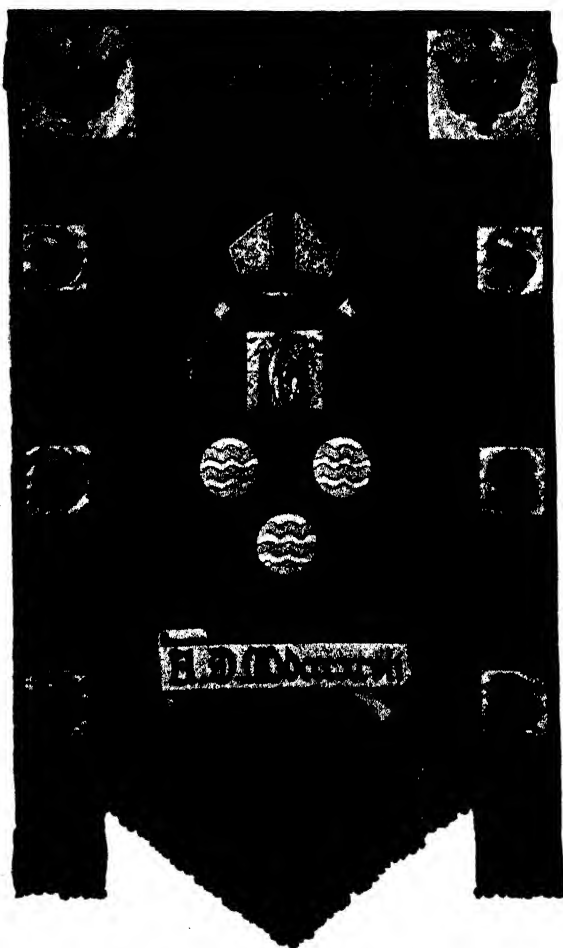


2. THE BANNER OF THE CHURCH CONGRESS AT SHREWSBURY.

banner can be either straight or cut in vandyke shape, as preferred.

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There are two methods of hanging the banner—loops of cord can be sewn on at intervals for the rod to pass through, or a hem may be made by sewing a piece of velvet like orphreys on the material, and slipping the rod through.



3. THE BANNER OF THE CHURCH CONGRESS AT NOTTINGHAM.

But it will be found better, in most cases, to obtain professional assistance when this stage of the work is reached, for nothing looks worse than a badly hung banner, and to get it quite straight and true is not easy.

I have endeavoured to give specimens of banners both elaborate and simple in their working, and suitable for the many purposes for which banners are used.



4. A CHRISTMAS BANNER.

No. 4 is a Christmas banner, worked for St. Michael's, Bussage.

For its central object it has a figure of the Holy Child,

## 118 English Church Needlework.

clothed in a purple tunic, edged with gold, standing, with arms extended, before a cross.

The figure is *appliqué*, the shading being worked over; the face also is worked in the same way, with the aid of partial painting. The hair and nimbus are entirely worked.



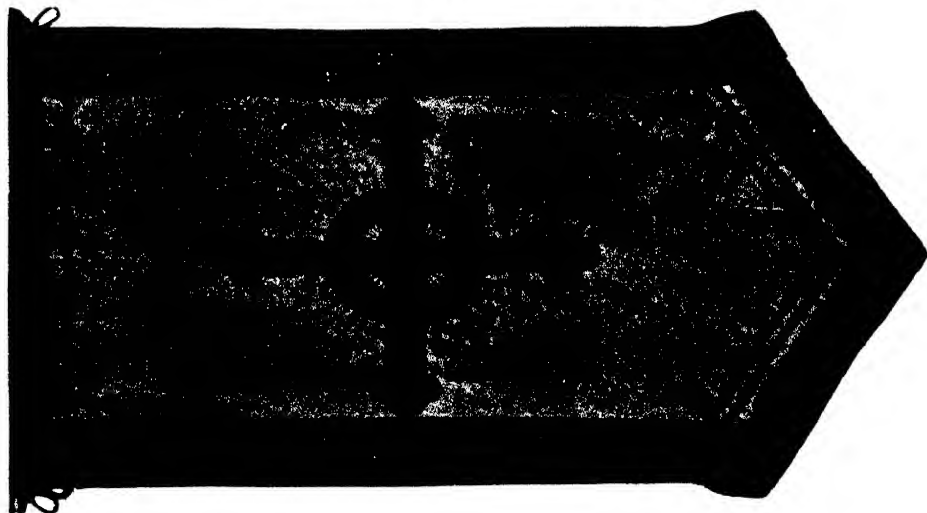
5. THE C.E.W.M.S. BANNER, ST. MATTHIAS,  
EARL'S COURT.



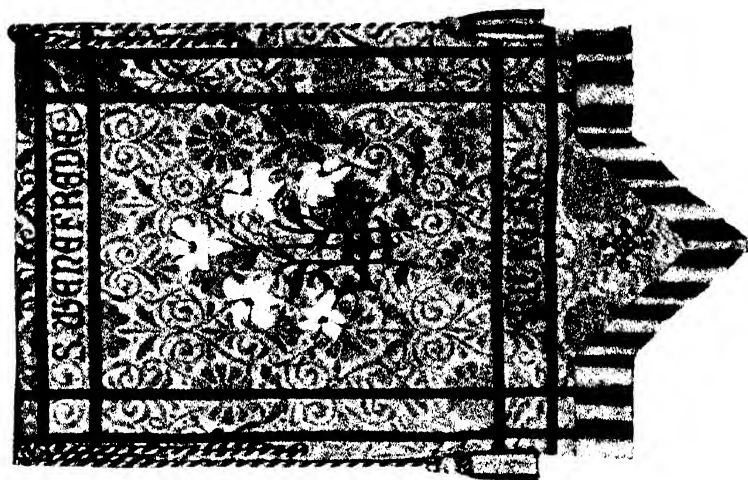
6. A TEMPERANCE BANNER.

Round the Holy Child stand four angels—two above, sorrowfully bearing the tokens of the Passion; two below, joyfully swinging censers.

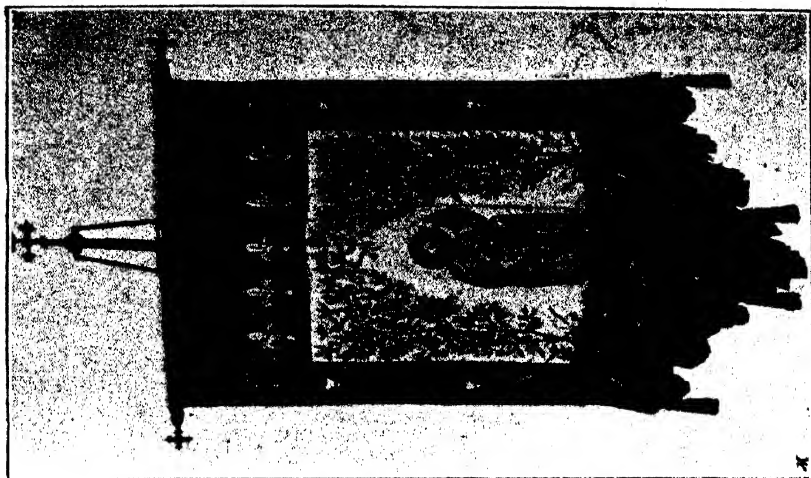
The figures and faces of the angels are *appliqué* and worked over, but the wings are worked entirely in floss, and the feathers, of white, green, pink and blue, are



7. BANNER IN ELY LADY CHAPEL.



8. THE BANNER.



9. PATRONAL BANNER OF ST. MATTHIAS,  
EARL'S COURT.





beautifully shaded and mingled, and with their double gold outline appear as things of glory.

The figures are mounted on a rich yellow and white brocade, and have above and below them orphreys of pale blue brocade, richly embroidered in floss and gold, with a design of roses. The lining is of a pale blue wool brocade, the same colour as the robes of the angels and as the orphreys.

Fringe and cord of the prevailing tints complete this richly and beautifully coloured banner.

No. 5 shows less design, but is extremely effective, and could be adapted and carried out in various colours.

No. 7, in the Lady Chapel, Ely, is also a simple design, the grounding being of pale cream brocade, with a border of the same material in red.

The cross of the centre-piece is worked in red purse silk, basket stitch, outlined with a very fine cord.

The circle is much raised, about one inch above cross, and is worked in real Viennese gold, the outer circle being also of flat Viennese gold, the rays from the cross being of similar gold finished with gilt spangles.

The scroll on the border is of Chinese gold thread, and the small crosses of white floss. The bottom is edged with gold coloured lace and fringe.



10. ST. GEORGE.

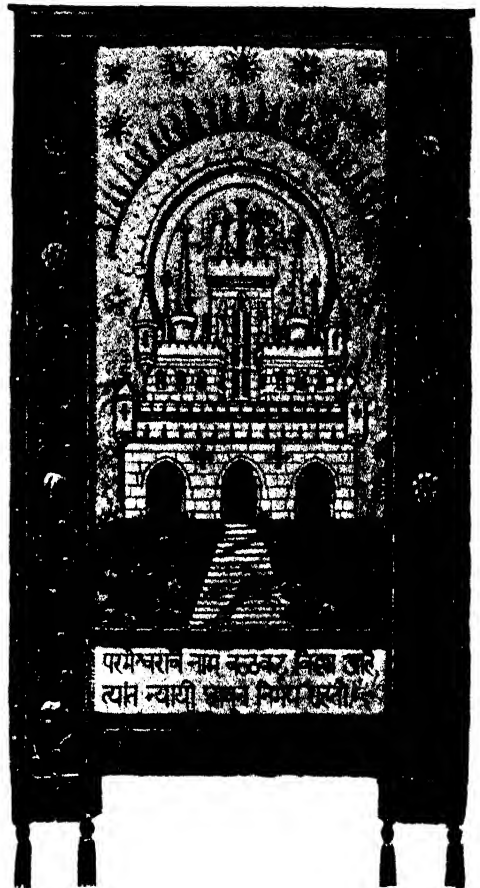
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No. 6 is that now used by the Women's Branch of the Lichfield Diocesan Temperance Society.

No. 8, another simple yet effective design, is used at St. Wenefreda, Bickley. The groundwork is of light blue



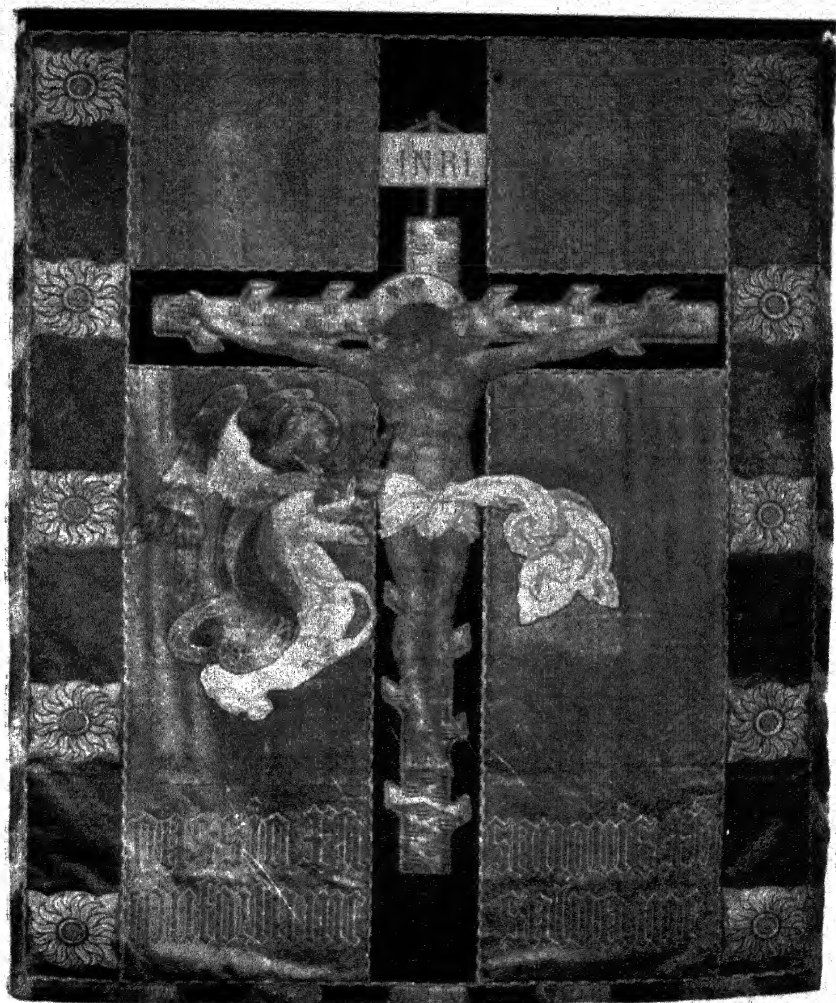
11. ST. HUBERT.



12. THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM.

brocade, and the flowers, most exquisitely worked, are shaded from white to pale pink. The fringe and hangings are made to correspond.

St. Matthias, Earl's Court, possesses in No. 9 a handsome piece of embroidery, being the patronal banner worked by the



13. BANNER AT ST. AGNES, KENNINGTON.





14. A CHOIR BANNER.



Wantage Sisters, who have also executed banners representing St. George(10), St. Hubert(11), and the Heavenly Jerusalem(12). The first is a magnificent piece of work. Both the attitude and the expression of the figure are admirable, and the colouring rich and harmonious. The groundwork is white, the orphreys being worked in red crosses and conventional roses. The dragon is a splendid monster, in blue, green, and gold. Perhaps the most wonderful effect is that of the Saint's armour, which is worked in silver and gold thread, pointed with black. The cloak is crimson, lined with purple, and the monograms are all gold.

The banner of St. Hubert has pale blue for its chief colouring, but the architecture is done in a pale dull red, and stands out boldly. The face of the Saint is so minutely worked that at first sight one is tempted to believe it to be the work of the brush instead of the needle.

The meaning of the "Heavenly Jerusalem" banner is more involved and mysterious, but the execution is wonderful. It is supposed to signify "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous fleeth unto it, and is safe." The orphreys represent the twelve manner of fruits.

Mr. C. E. Kemp's designs need no comment, but not one has been more admired than that possessed by St. Agnes', Kennington (13). Its real beauty cannot be transferred to paper. The foundation is of rose-coloured silk, upon which is laid a red velvet cross, and upon this is a marvellously beautiful representation of the Crucifixion. The cross upon which the Saviour rests is of gold, and is painted, as is the figure; the whole then *appliqué* to the groundwork. The orphreys are of pale green silk, worked with orange-red flowers. The letters are in dark blue cloth, *appliqué*.



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No. 14 is a good example of a choir banner now at the Church of Holy Trinity, Ryde. The main features are the three interlacing circles—the emblem of the Holy Trinity—and the finely proportioned cross passing through them.

No. 15 is a banner used by the Men's Bible Class of St. Jude's, Preston, and is the work of a lady. It is nine feet six inches long by six feet wide. The orphreys are of pale blue *broché* silk, with bursting pomegranates, and edged with silk lace, the design which is upon it being of Eucharis lilies and foliage, while at the top and bottom of the centre panel are the words "St. Jude's Men's Bible Class," in white corded silk letters edged with gold.

The figure of the Saint, on a gold background, is no less than four feet eight inches high, and is most striking in design and execution, standing out prominently, and vested in alb and crimson cope. The latter is lined with green, all the material being *broché* silk. Few modern examples of figure-work are more pleasing than the above, the (three-quarter) face being most touching in expression, with pensive eyes bent on the scroll inscribed with the sacred text. No little skill has been devoted to the countenance, the hands and feet, which are such delicate specimens of woman's skill that they look rather as if they had come from the painter's studio.

On the reverse side, the panel is of blue *broché*, the stoles of gold, and above and beneath are passion flowers elaborately embroidered. For the centre there is the sacred monogram **IHS**, upon which the Holy Dove, larger than the size of a living dove, is gently brooding, rays of gold glittering between the letters and the symbol of the sacred Spirit.

## English Church Needlework. 129

No. 16 is a medallion for an *Agnus Dei* banner. This should be first worked upon linen, and then transferred to a velvet or brocade background.

The figure of the Lamb is pure white, and is worked over a padding in a manner that strikes one as a great improvement upon the loosely worked French knots with which such figures are most usually covered. White purse silk is used, and is untwisted as it is caught down over the design, thus giving a wavy, rather than a curled appearance, with excellent effect.

Considerable care is needed in working the head and face, and an amateur is recommended either to copy this from a well-worked specimen, or to have it done for her by an expert, should she have any doubt of her own powers.

The *Agnus Dei* stands upon a terrace of many-coloured flowers, silhouetted against a sky of clear blue silk entirely worked in plain blue, the threads being slightly drawn together by the securing stitches.

The cross borne by the Lamb is effectively arranged with bosses at the tips of the arms, so that they stand out like jewels in high relief above the rest of the design.

A broad framework of gold thread is worked in couching



15. BANNER OF MEN'S BIBLE CLASS.

## 130 English Church Needlework.

round the central figure, and groups of white lilies, the emblem of purity, are *appliqué* at intervals beyond this.

The groundwork of the banner is white brocaded satin, with a coloured lace running down each side. Beautiful shades of blue, green, and pink are finely blended in the design with a large amount of embroidery in gold and silver thread.



16. MEDALLION OF AN AGNUS DEI  
BANNER.

## XI. On Copes.

OUR study of English Church needlework would not be complete without some reference to copes and chasubles, many beautiful examples of which are now in use. Of all the garments used by the ancient Christian Church, none are better known or have more steadfastly held their original position of dignity. They have been worn for centuries by sovereigns at their coronation, and at the same ceremony by the archbishop and the prelates who assist him. Those worn by the clergy of St. Paul's Cathedral at the great Thanksgiving service on Jubilee Day are worthy of notice, and are made of cream-coloured silk and gold, of a bold seventeenth century design. The orphreys are of green velvet panelled up with gold lace, the alternate panels being of gold arabesque, and the crossed swords being in gold on red velvet shields.

The hoods are of rich green velvet, embroidered in gold with the sacred monogram surrounded by rays.<sup>m</sup> Both the hoods and the bottom of the copes are bordered by a two-inch silk and gold fringe.

The hood is an exceptionally beautiful piece of work; the delicate foliage work of the individual rays will bear the closest inspection, and still looks equally well, as a

## 132 English Church Needlework.

part of the whole, from a distance—a result which is the crucial test of the value and beauty of all Church embroidery.



1. FRONT OF COPE.

For a velvet cope, no better example can be taken than that of the Bishop of Lichfield. It is made of rich, red silk velvet, stamped, and the pattern outlined and worked up with gold thread. It is also powdered with shields of cloth of gold, containing the sacred monogram worked in gold, and surrounded with gold rays.

The hood is of cloth of gold, embroidered with the Annunciation framed in gold tabernacle work. On the border over the hood are the arms of the See, and on either side figures of saints under tabernacle work. These saints are the Venerable Bede, St. Werburgh, St. Chad, St. Aidan,

St. Paulinus, and St. Augustine of Canterbury.

A beautiful Easter cope is No. 5, which was given to St. Andrew's, Worthing, by the congregation. The body of



2. BACK OF COPE.



## English Church Needlework. 135

the cope is of gold and white brocatelle, and the embroidery merits the closest inspection, though our reproduction cannot give an adequate idea of its beauty and finish. In particular, the robe of Our Lord and the gold diaper



3. THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD'S COPE.

background under the angels' canopies have not their due effect.

The form of a cope is more that of a *cycloid* than of a semi-circle, as if cut strictly to this latter shape it would lose much of its grace and dignity in the fall from the shoulders.



## 136 English Church Needlework.

Dimensions must, of course, vary a little, but taken as a general rule, the cope that is five feet in length at the back should measure eleven feet along its straight edge. It should be laid out on a large table for work, and if *carefully* tacked will not be found difficult to make up. The inner lining of unbleached calico or coarse linen should be exactly the size of the silk or velvet, but the silk lining must be at least three quarters of an inch larger. This is tacked firmly over



4. THE HOOD OF THE EASTER COPE.

the edge on the right side, and then covered by the orphrey at the upper edge and the narrow border of needlework, lace or fringe at the lower edge. The fringe of the Anglo-Saxon cope was frequently made of little bells of pure gold.

The method of turning the silk lining over upon the superior material should always be adopted when a border or fringe is used. It is not only neat and lasting, but economical, for the costlier stuff can be cut to its

exact size, and thus save many an inch in the making of the garment or hanging.

The hood, originally meant as a real head-covering, became only an appendage before the close of the Anglo-Saxon period, and after the Normans came, was entirely abandoned for the flat piece of embroidery now designated the "hood of the cope." Upon it has generally been pictured subjects of holy events, marking the Festivals of the Church,



5. AN EASTER COPE.



















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